RIGHTS OF MAN.

PART

THE SECOND.

COMBINING

PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE.

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PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE

COMBINING

THE SECOND

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PRIMARY

RIGHTS OF MAN.

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COMBINING

PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE.

BY

THOMAS PAINE,

SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO CONGRESS IN THE AMERICAN WAR, AND AUTHOR OF THE WORK ENTITLED COMMON SENSE; AND THE FIRST PART OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

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1792.

LONDON

TO

M. DE LA FAYETTE.

AFTER an acquaintance of nearly fifteen years, in difficult ſituations in America, and various conſultations in Europe, I feel a pleaſure in preſenting to you this ſmall treatiſe, in gratitude for your ſervices to my beloved America, and as a teſtimony of my eſteem for the virtues, public and private, which I know you to poſſeſs.

The only point upon which I could ever diſcover that we differed, was not as to principles of government, but as to time. For my own part, I think it equally as injurious to good principles to permit them to linger, as to puſh them on too faſt. That which you ſuppoſe accompliſhable in fourteen or fifteen years, I may believe practicable in a much ſhorter period. Mankind, as it appears to me, are always ripe enough to underſtand their true intereſt, provided it be preſented clearly to their underſtanding, and that in a manner not to create ſuſpicion by any thing like ſelf-deſign, nor offend by aſſuming too much. Where we would wiſh to reform we muſt not reproach.

When the American revolution was eſtabliſhed, I felt a diſpoſition to ſit ſerenely down and enjoy

the calm. It did not appear to me that any object could afterwards arise great enough to make me quit tranquillity, and feel as I had felt before. But when principle, and not place, is the energetic cause of action, a man, I find, is every where the same.

I am now once more in the public world; and as I have not a right to contemplate on so many years of remaining life as you have, I am resolved to labour as fast as I can; and as I am anxious for your aid and your company, I wish you to hasten your principles, and overtake me.

If you make a campaign the ensuing spring, which it is most probable there will be no occasion for, I will come and join you. Should the campaign commence, I hope it will terminate in the extinction of German despotism, and in establishing the freedom of all Germany. When France shall be surrounded with revolutions, she will be in peace and safety, and her taxes, as well as those of Germany, will consequently become less.

Your sincere,

Affectionate Friend,

THOMAS PAINE.

London, Feb. 9, 1792.

PREFACE.

WHEN I began the chapter entitled the "*Concluſion*" in the former part of the RIGHTS OF MAN, publiſhed laſt year, it was my intention to have extended it to a greater length; but in caſting the whole matter in my mind which I wiſhed to add, I found that I muſt either make the work too bulky, or contract my plan too much. I therefore brought it to a cloſe as ſoon as the ſubject would admit, and reſerved what I had further to ſay to another opportunity.

Several other reaſons contributed to produce this determination. I wiſhed to know the manner in which a work, written in a ſtyle of thinking and expreſſion different to what had been cuſtomary in England, would be received before I proceeded farther. A great field was opening to the view of mankind by means of the French Revolution. Mr. Burke's outrageous oppoſition thereto brought the controverſy into England. He attacked principles which he knew (from information) I would conteſt with him, becauſe they are principles I believe to be good, and which I have contributed to eſtabliſh, and conceive myſelf bound to defend. Had he not urged the controverſy, I had moſt probably been a ſilent man.

Another reaſon for deferring the remainder of the work was, that Mr. Burke promiſed in his firſt publication to renew the ſubject at another opportunity, and to make a compariſon of what he called the Engliſh and French Conſtitutions. I therefore held myſelf in reſerve for him. He has publiſhed two works ſince, without doing this; which he certainly would not have omitted, had the compariſon been in his favour.

In his laſt work, "*His appeal from the new to "the old Whigs,*" he has quoted about ten pages from the *Rights of Man*, and having given himſelf the trouble of doing this, ſays, "he ſhall not at- "tempt in the ſmalleſt degree to refute them," meaning the principles therein contained. I am enough acquainted with Mr. Burke to know, that he would if he could. But inſtead of conteſting them, he immediately after conſoles himſelf with ſaying, that "he has done his part."—He has not done his part. He has not performed his promiſe of a compariſon of conſtitutions. He ſtarted the controverſy, he gave the challenge, and has fled from it; and he is now a *caſe in point* with his own opinion, that, "*the age of chivalry is gone!*"

The title, as well as the ſubſtance of his laſt work, his "*Appeal,*" is his condemnation. Principles muſt ſtand on their own merits, and if they are good they certainly will. To put them under the ſhelter of other men's authority, as Mr. Burke has done, ſerves to bring them into ſuſpicion. Mr. Burke is not very fond of dividing his honours, but in this caſe he is artfully dividing the diſgrace.

But

But who are thoſe to whom Mr. Burke has made his appeal? A ſet of childiſh thinkers and half-way politicians born in the laſt century; men who went no farther with any principle than as it ſuited their purpoſe as a party; the nation was always left out of the queſtion; and this has been the character of every party from that day to this. The nation ſees nothing in ſuch works, or ſuch politics worthy its attention. A little matter will move a party, but it muſt be ſomething great that moves a nation.

Though I ſee nothing in Mr. Burke's Appeal worth taking much notice of, there is, however, one expreſſion upon which I ſhall offer a few remarks.—After quoting largely from the *Rights of Man*, and declining to conteſt the principles contained in that work, he ſays, "This will moſt "probably be done *(if ſuch writings ſhall be* "*thought to deſerve any other refutation than that* "*of criminal juſtice)* by others, who may think "with Mr. Burke and with the ſame zeal."

In the firſt place, it has not yet been done by any body. Not leſs, I believe, than eight or ten pamphlets intended as anſwers to the former part of the "Rights of Man" have been publiſhed by different perſons, and not one of them, to my knowledge, has extended to a ſecond edition, nor are even the titles of them ſo much as generally remembered. As I am averſe to unneceſſarily multiplying publications, I have anſwered none of them. And as I believe that a man may write himſelf

himſelf out of reputation when nobody elſe can do it, I am careful to avoid that rock.

But as I would decline unneceſſary publications on the one hand, ſo would I avoid every thing that might appear like ſullen pride on the other. If Mr. Burke, or any perſon on his ſide the queſtion, will produce an anſwer to the "Rights of Man," that ſhall extend to an half, or even to a fourth part of the number of copies to which the Rights of Man extended, I will reply to his work. But until this be done, I ſhall ſo far take the ſenſe of the public for my guide (and the world knows I am not a flatterer) that what they do not think worth while to read, is not worth mine to anſwer. I ſuppoſe the number of copies to which the firſt part of the *Rights of Man* extended, taking England, Scotland, and Ireland, is not leſs than between forty and fifty thouſand.

I now come to remark on the remaining part of the quotation I have made from Mr. Burke.

"If," ſays he, "ſuch writings ſhall be thought "to deſerve any other refutation than that of *cri-*"*minal* juſtice."

Pardoning the pun, it muſt be *criminal* juſtice indeed that ſhould condemn a work as a ſubſtitute for not being able to refute it. The greateſt condemnation that could be paſſed upon it would be a refutation. But in proceeding by the method Mr. Burke alludes to, the condemnation would, in the final event, paſs upon the criminality of the proceſs and not upon the work, and in this caſe, I had

had rather be the author, than be either the judge, or the jury, that ſhould condemn it.

But to come at once to the point. I have differed from ſome profeſſional gentlemen on the ſubject of proſecutions, and I ſince find they are falling into my opinion, which I will here ſtate as fully, but as conciſely as I can.

I will firſt put a caſe with reſpect to any law, and then compare it with a government, or with what in England is, or has been, called a conſtitution.

It would be an act of deſpotiſm, or what in England is called arbitrary power, to make a law to prohibit inveſtigating the principles, good or bad, on which ſuch a law, or any other is founded.

If a law be bad, it is one thing to oppoſe the practice of it, but it is quite a different thing to expoſe its errors, to reaſon on its defects, and to ſhew cauſe why it ſhould be repealed, or why another ought to be ſubſtituted in its place. I have always held it an opinion (making it alſo my practice) that it is better to obey a bad law, making uſe at the ſame time of every argument to ſhew its errors and procure its repeal, than forcibly to violate it; becauſe the precedent of breaking a bad law might weaken the force, and lead to a diſcretionary violation, of thoſe which are good.

The caſe is the ſame with reſpect to principles and forms of government, or to what are called conſtitutions and the parts of which they are compoſed.

It is for the good of nations, and not for the emolument or aggrandizement of particular individuals, that government ought to be eſtabliſhed, and that mankind are at the expence of ſupporting it. The defects of every government and conſtitution, both as to principle and form muſt, on a parity of reaſoning, be as open to diſcuſſion as the defects of a law, and it is a duty which every man owes to ſociety to point them out. When thoſe defects, and the means of remedying them are generally ſeen by a nation, that nation will reform its government or its conſtitution in the one caſe, as the government repealed or reformed the law in the other. The operation of government is reſtricted to the making and the adminiſtering of laws; but it is to a nation that the right of forming or reforming, generating or regenerating conſtitutions and governments belong; and conſequently thoſe ſubjects, as ſubjects of inveſtigation, are always before a country *as a matter of right*, and cannot, without invading the general rights of that country, be made ſubjects for proſecution. On this ground I will meet Mr. Burke whenever he pleaſe. It is better that the whole argument ſhould come out, than to ſeek to ſtifle it. It was himſelf that opened the controverſy, and he ought not to deſert it.

I do not believe that monarchy and ariſtocracy will continue ſeven years longer in any of the enlightened countries in Europe. If better reaſons can be ſhewn for them than againſt them, they will ſtand; if the contrary, they will not. Mankind

are

are not now to be told they ſhall not think, or they ſhall not read; and publications that go no farther than to inveſtigate principies of government, to invite men to reaſon and to reflect, and to ſhew the errors and excellences of different ſyſtems, have a right to appear. If they do not excite attention, they are not worth the trouble of a proſecution; and if they do, the proſecution will amount to nothing, ſince it cannot amount to a prohibition of reading. This would be a ſentence on the public, inſtead of the author, and would alſo be the moſt effectual mode of making or haſtening revolutions.

On all caſes that apply univerſally to a nation, with reſpect to ſyſtems of government, a jury of *twelve* men is not competent to decide. Where there are no witneſſes to be examined, no facts to be proved, and where the whole matter is before the whole public, and the merits or demerits of it reſting on their opinion; and where there is nothing to be known in a court, but what every body knows out of it, every twelve men is equally as good a jury as the other, and would moſt probably reverſe each other's verdict; or from the variety of their opinions, not be able to form one. It is one caſe, whether a nation approve a work, or a plan; but it is quite another caſe, whether it will commit to any ſuch jury the power of determining whether that nation have a right to, or ſhall reform its government, or not. I mention thoſe caſes, that Mr. Burke may ſee I have not written on Government

without

without reflecting on what is Law, as well as on what are Rights.—The only effectual jury in ſuch caſes would be, a convention of the whole nation fairly elected; for in all ſuch caſes the whole nation is the vicinage. If Mr. Burke will propoſe ſuch a jury, I will wave all privileges of being the citizen of another country, and, defending its principles, abide the iſſue, provided he will do the ſame; for my opinion is, that his work and his principles would be condemned inſtead of mine.

As to the prejudices which men have from education and habit, in favour of any particular form or ſyſtem of government, thoſe prejudices have yet to ſtand the teſt of reaſon and reflection. In fact, ſuch prejudices are nothing. No man is prejudiced in favour of a thing, knowing it to be wrong. He is attached to it on the belief of its being right; and when he ſee it is not ſo, the prejudice will be gone. We have but a defective idea of what prejudice is. It might be ſaid, that until men think for themſelves the whole is prejudice, and *not opinion*; for that only is opinion which is the reſult of reaſon and reflection. I offer this remark, that Mr. Burke may not confide too much in what has been the cuſtomary prejudices of the country.

I do not believe that the people of England have ever been fairly and candidly dealt by. They have been impoſed upon by parties, and by men aſſuming the character of leaders. It is time that the nation ſhould riſe above thoſe trifles. It is time to diſmiſs that inattention which has ſo long

been

been the encouraging cauſe of ſtretching taxation to exceſs. It is time to diſmiſs all thoſe ſongs and toaſts which are calculated to enſlave, and operate to ſuffocate reflection. On all ſuch ſubjects men have but to think, and they will neither act wrong nor be miſled. To ſay that any people are not fit for freedom, is to make poverty their choice, and to ſay they had rather be loaded with taxes than not. If ſuch a caſe could be proved, it would equally prove, that thoſe who govern are not fit to govern them, for they are a part of the ſame national maſs.

But admitting governments to be changed all over Europe; it certainly may be done without convulſion or revenge. It is not worth making changes or revolutions, unleſs it be for ſome great national benefit; and when this ſhall appear to a nation, the danger will be, as in America and France, to thoſe who oppoſe; and with this reflection I cloſe my Preface.

THOMAS PAINE.

Londdon, Feb. 9, 1792.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION, - Page 1

CHAPTER I.

Of Society and Civilization, - - 7

CHAPTER II.

Of the Origin of the preſent old Governments, 15

CHAPTER III.

Of the new and old Syſtems of Government, 19

CHAPTER IV.

Of Conſtitutions, - - 40

CHAPTER V.

Ways and Means of reforming the political Condition of Europe, interſperſed with Miſcellaneous Obſervations, - - 78

Appendix. - - 175

RIGHTS OF MAN.

PART II.

INTRODUCTION.

WHAT Archimedes ſaid of the mechanical powers, may be applied to Reaſon and Liberty: "*Had we,*" ſaid he, "*a place to ſtand* "*upon, we might raiſe the world.*"

The revolution of America preſented in politics what was only theory in mechanics. So deeply rooted were all the governments of the old world, and ſo effectually had the tyranny and the antiquity of habit eſtabliſhed itſelf over the mind, that no beginning could be made in Aſia, Africa, or Europe, to reform the political condition of man. Freedom had been hunted round the globe; reaſon was conſidered as rebellion; and the ſlavery of fear had made men afraid to think.

But ſuch is the irreſiſtible nature of truth, that all it aſks, and all it wants, is the liberty of appearing. The ſun needs no inſcription to diſtinguiſh him from darkneſs; and no ſooner did the American governments diſplay themſelves to the world, than

 deſpotiſm

deſpotiſm felt a ſhock, and man began to contemplate redreſs.

The independence of America, conſidered merely as a ſeparation from England, would have been a matter but of little importance, had it not been accompanied by a revolution in the principles and practice of governments. She made a ſtand, not for herſelf only, but for the world, and looked beyond the advantages herſelf could receive. Even the Heſſian, though hired to fight againſt her, may live to bleſs his defeat; and England, condemning the vicioufneſs of its government, rejoice in its miſcarriage.

As America was the only ſpot in the political world, where the principles of univerſal reformation could begin, ſo alſo was it the beſt in the natural world. An aſſemblage of circumſtances conſpired, not only to give birth, but to add gigantic maturity to its principles. The ſcene which that country preſents to the eye of a ſpectator, has ſomething in it which generates and encourages great ideas. Nature appears to him in magnitude. The mighty objects he beholds, act upon his mind by enlarging it, and he partakes of the greatneſs he contemplates.—Its firſt ſettlers were emigrants from different European nations, and of diverſified profeſſions of religion, retiring from the governmental perſecutions of the old world, and meeting in the new, not as enemies, but as brothers. The wants which neceſſarily accompany the cultivation of a wilderneſs produced among them a ſtate of ſociety, which countries, long haraſſed by the quarrels and intrigues of governments,

governments, had neglected to cheriſh. In ſuch a ſituation man becomes what he ought. He ſees his ſpecies, not with the inhuman idea of a natural enemy, but as kindred; and the example ſhews to the artificial world, that man muſt go back to Nature for information.

From the rapid progreſs which America makes in every ſpecies of improvement, it is rational to conclude, that if the governments of Aſia, Africa, and Europe, had begun on a principle ſimilar to that of America, or had not been very early corrupted therefrom, that thoſe countries muſt by this time have been in a far ſuperior condition to what they are. Age after age has paſſed away, for no other purpoſe than to behold their wretchedneſs.—Could we ſuppoſe a ſpectator who knew nothing of the world, and who was put into it merely to make his obſervations, he would take a great part of the old world to be new, juſt ſtruggling with the difficulties and hardſhips of an infant ſettlement. He could not ſuppoſe that the hordes of miſerable poor, with which old countries abound, could be any other than thoſe who had not yet had time to provide for themſelves. Little would he think they were the conſequence of what in ſuch countries is called government.

If, from the more wretched parts of the old world, we look at thoſe which are in an advanced ſtage of improvement, we ſtill find the greedy hand of government thruſting itſelf into every corner and crevice of induſtry, and graſping the ſpoil of the multitude. Invention is continually exerciſed, to furniſh new pretences for revenue

and taxation. It watches proſperity as its prey, and permits none to eſcape without a tribute.

As revolutions have begun, (and as the probability is always greater againſt a thing beginning, than of proceeding after it has begun), it is natural to expect that other revolutions will follow. The amazing and ſtill increaſing expences with which old governments are conducted, the numerous wars they engage in or provoke, the embarraſſments they throw in the way of univerſal civilization and commerce, and the oppreſſion and uſurpation they act at home, have wearied out the patience, and exhauſted the property of the world. In ſuch a ſituation, and with the examples already exiſting, revolutions are to be looked for. They are become ſubjects of univerſal converſation, and may be conſidered as the *Order of the day*.

If ſyſtems of government can be introduced, leſs expenſive, and more productive of general happineſs, than thoſe which have exiſted, all attempts to oppoſe their progreſs will in the end be fruitleſs. Reaſon, like time, will make its own way, and prejudice will fall in a combat with intereſt. If univerſal peace, civilization, and commerce, are ever to be the happy lot of man, it cannot be accompliſhed but by a revolution in the ſyſtem of governments. All the monarchical governments are military. War is their trade, plunder and revenue their objects. While ſuch governments continue, peace has not the abſolute ſecurity of a day. What is the hiſtory of all monarchical governments, but a diſguſtful picture of human wretchedneſs, and the accidental reſpite

of

of a few years repoſe? Wearied with war, and tired with human butchery, they ſat down to reſt and called it peace. This certainly is not the condition that Heaven intended for man; and if *this be monarchy*, well might monarchy be reckoned among the ſins of the Jews.

The revolutions which formerly took place in the world, had nothing in them that intereſted the bulk of mankind. They extended only to a change of perſons and meaſures but not of principles, and roſe or fell among the common tranſactions of the moment. What we now behold, may not improperly be called a "*counter revolution*." Conqueſt and tyranny, at ſome early period, diſpoſſeſſed man of his rights, and he is now recovering them. And as the tide of all human affairs has its ebb and flow in directions contrary to each other, ſo alſo is it in this. Government founded on a *moral theory*, *on a ſyſtem of univerſal peace*, *on the indefeaſible hereditary Rights of Man*, is now revolving from weſt to eaſt, by a ſtronger impulſe than the government of the ſword revolved from eaſt to weſt. It intereſts not particular individuals, but nations, in its progreſs, and promiſes a new æra to the human race.

The danger to which the ſucceſs of revolutions is moſt expoſed, is that of attempting them before the principles on which they proceed, and the advantages to reſult from them, are ſufficiently ſeen and underſtood. Almoſt every thing appertaining to the circumſtances of a nation, has been abſorbed and confounded under the general and

myſterious word *government*. Though it avoids taking to its account the errors it commits, and the miſchiefs it occaſions, it fails not to arrogate to itſelf whatever has the appearance of proſperity. It robs induſtry of its honours, by pedanticly making itſelf the cauſe of its effects; and purloins from the general character of man, the merits that appertain to him as a ſocial being.

It may therefore be of uſe, in this day of revolutions, to diſcriminate between thoſe things which are the effect of government, and thoſe which are not. This will beſt be done by taking a review of ſociety and civilization, and the conſequences reſulting therefrom, as things diſtinct from what are called governments. By beginning with this inveſtigation, we ſhall be able to aſſign effects to their proper cauſe, and analize the maſs of common errors.

CHAP. I.

CHAP. I.

OF SOCIETY AND CIVILIZATION.

GREAT part of that order which reigns among mankind is not the effect of government. It has its origin in the principles of ſociety and the natural conſtitution of man. It exiſted prior to government, and would exiſt if the formality of government was aboliſhed. The mutual dependance and reciprocal intereſt which man has upon man, and all the parts of a civilized community upon each other, create that great chain of connection which holds it together. The landholder, the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradeſman, and every occupation, proſpers by the aid which each receives from the other, and from the whole. Common intereſt regulates their concerns, and forms their law; and the laws which common uſage ordains, have a greater influence than the laws of government. In fine, ſociety performs for itſelf almoſt every thing which is aſcribed to government.

To underſtand the nature and quantity of government proper for man, it is neceſſary to attend to his character. As Nature created him

for ſocial life, ſhe fitted him for the ſtation ſhe intended. In all caſes ſhe made his natural wants greater than his individual powers. No one man is capable, without the aid of ſociety, of ſupplying his own wants; and thoſe wants, acting upon every individual, impel the whole of them into ſociety, as naturally as gravitation acts to a center.

But ſhe has gone further. She has not only forced man into ſociety, by a diverſity of wants, which the reciprocal aid of each other can ſupply, but ſhe has implanted in him a ſyſtem of ſocial affections, which, though not neceſſary to his exiſtence, are eſſential to his happineſs. There is no period in life when this love for ſociety ceaſes to act. It begins and ends with our being.

If we examine, with attention, into the compoſition and conſtitution of man, the diverſity of his wants, and the diverſity of talents in different men for reciprocally accommodating the wants of each other, his propenſity to ſociety, and conſequently to preſerve the advantages reſulting from it, we ſhall eaſily diſcover, that a great part of what is called government is mere impoſition.

Government is no farther neceſſary than to ſupply the few caſes to which ſociety and civilization are not conveniently competent; and inſtances are not wanting to ſhew, that every thing which government can uſefully add thereto, has been performed by the common conſent of ſociety, without government.

For upwards of two years from the commencement of the American war, and to a longer period

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in ſeveral of the American States, there were no eſtabliſhed forms of government. The old governments had been aboliſhed, and the country was too much occupied in defence, to employ its attention in eſtabliſhing new governments; yet during this interval, order and harmony were preſerved as inviolate as in any country in Europe. There is a natural aptneſs in man, and more ſo in ſociety, becauſe it embraces a greater variety of abilities and reſource, to accommodate itſelf to whatever ſituation it is in. The inſtant formal government is aboliſhed, ſociety begins to act. A general aſſociation takes place, and common intereſt produces common ſecurity.

So far is it from being true, as has been pretended, that the abolition of any formal government is the diſſolution of ſociety, that it acts by a contrary impulſe, and brings the latter the cloſer together. All that part of its organization which it had committed to its government, devolves again upon itſelf, and acts through its medium. When men, as well from natural inſtinct, as from reciprocal benefits, have habituated themſelves to ſocial and civilized life, there is always enough of its principles in practice to carry them through any changes they may find neceſſary or convenient to make in their government. In ſhort, man is ſo naturally a creature of ſociety, that it is almoſt impoſſible to put him out of it.

Formal government makes but a ſmall part of civilized life; and when even the beſt that human

wiſdom

wiſdom can deviſe is eſtabliſhed, it is a thing more in name and idea, than in fact. It is to the great and fundamental principles of ſociety and civilization—to the common uſage univerſally conſented to, and mutually and reciprocally maintained—to the unceaſing circulation of intereſt, which, paſſing through its million channels, invigorates the whole maſs of civilized man—it is to theſe things, infinitely more than to any thing which even the beſt inſtituted government can perform, that the ſafety and proſperity of the individual and of the whole depends.

The more perfect civilization is, the leſs occaſion has it for government, becauſe the more does it regulate its own affairs, and govern itſelf; but ſo contrary is the practice of old governments to the reaſon of the caſe, that the expences of them increaſe in the proportion they ought to diminiſh. It is but few general laws that civilized life requires, and thoſe of ſuch common uſefulneſs, that whether they are enforced by the forms of government or not, the effect will be nearly the ſame. If we conſider what the principles are that firſt condenſe men into ſociety, and what the motives that regulate their mutual intercourſe afterwards, we ſhall find, by the time we arrive at what is called government, that nearly the whole of the buſineſs is performed by the natural operation of the parts upon each other.

Man, with reſpect to all thoſe matters, is more a creature of conſiſtency than he is aware, or that

governments

governments would wiſh him to believe. All the great laws of ſociety are laws of nature. Thoſe of trade and commerce, whether with reſpect to the intercourſe of individuals, or of nations, are laws of mutual and reciprocal intereſt. They are followed and obeyed, becauſe it is the intereſt of the parties ſo to do, and not on account of any formal laws their governments may impoſe or interpoſe.

But how often is the natural propenſity to ſociety diſturbed or deſtroyed by the operations of government! When the latter, inſtead of being ingrafted on the principles of the former, aſſumes to exiſt for itſelf, and acts by partialities of favour and oppreſſion, it becomes the cauſe of the miſchiefs it ought to prevent.

If we look back to the riots and tumults, which at various times have happened in England, we ſhall find, that they did not proceed from the want of a government, but that government was itſelf the generating cauſe; inſtead of conſolidating ſociety it divided it; it deprived it of its natural coheſion, and engendered diſcontents and diſorders, which otherwiſe would not have exiſted. In thoſe aſſociations which men promiſcuouſly form for the purpoſe of trade, or of any concern, in which government is totally out of the queſtion, and in which they act merely on the principles of ſociety, we ſee how naturally the various parties unite; and this ſhews, by compariſon, that governments, ſo far from being always the cauſe or means of order, are often the

deſtruction

deſtruction of it. The riots of 1780 had no other ſource than the remains of thoſe prejudices, which the government itſelf had encouraged. But with reſpect to England there are alſo other cauſes.

Exceſs and inequality of taxation, however diſguiſed in the means, never fail to appear in their effects. As a great maſs of the community are thrown thereby into poverty and diſcontent, they are conſtantly on the brink of commotion; and, deprived, as they unfortunately are, of the means of information, are eaſily heated to outrage. Whatever the apparent cauſe of any riots may be, the real one is always want of happineſs. It ſhews that ſomething is wrong in the ſyſtem of government, that injures the felicity by which ſociety is to be preſerved.

But as fact is ſuperior to reaſoning, the inſtance of America preſents itſelf to confirm theſe obſervations.—If there is a country in the world, where concord, according to common calculation, would be leaſt expected, it is America. Made up, as it is, of people from different nations *, accuſtomed to

* That part of America which is generally called New-England, including New-Hampſhire, Maſſachuſetts, Rhode-Iſland, and Connecticut, is peopled chiefly by Engliſh deſcendants. In the ſtate of New-York, about half are Dutch, the reſt Engliſh, Scotch, and Iriſh. In New-Jerſey, a mixture of Engliſh and Dutch, with ſome Scotch and Iriſh. In Pennſylvania, about one third are Engliſh, another Germans, and the remainder Scotch and Iriſh, with ſome Swedes. The States to the ſouthward have a greater proportion of Engliſh than the middle States, but in all of them there is a mixture; and beſides thoſe enumerated,

to different forms and habits of government, ſpeaking different languages, and more different in their modes of worſhip, it would appear that the union of ſuch a people was impracticable; but by the ſimple operation of conſtructing government on the principles of ſociety and the rights of man, every difficulty retires, and all the parts are brought into cordial uniſon. There, the poor are not oppreſſed, the rich are not privileged. Induſtry is not mortified by the ſplendid extravagance of a court rioting at its expence. Their taxes are few, becauſe their government is juſt; and as there is nothing to render them wretched, there is nothing to engender riots and tumults.

A metaphyſical man, like Mr. Burke, would have tortured his invention to diſcover how ſuch a people could be governed. He would have ſuppoſed that ſome muſt be managed by fraud, others by force, and all by ſome contrivance; that genius muſt be hired to impoſe upon ignorance, and ſhew and parade to faſcinate the vulgar. Loſt in the abundance of his reſearches, he would have reſolved and re-reſolved, and finally overlooked the plain and eaſy road that lay directly before him.

One of the great advantages of the American revolution has been, that it led to a diſcovery of

enumerated, there are a conſiderable number of French, and ſome few of all the European nations lying on the coaſt. The moſt numerous religious denomination are the Preſbyterians; but no one ſect is eſtabliſhed above another, and all men are equally citizens.

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the principles, and laid open the impoſition of governments. All the revolutions till then had been worked within the atmoſphere of a court, and never on the great floor of a nation. The parties were always of the claſs of courtiers; and whatever was their rage for reformation, they carefully preſerved the fraud of the profeſſion.

In all caſes they took care to repreſent government as a thing made up of myſteries, which only themſelves underſtood; and they hid from the underſtanding of thé nation, the only thing that was beneficial to know, namely, *That government is nothing more than a national aſſociation acting on the principles of ſociety.*

HAVING thus endeavoured to ſhew, that the ſocial and civilized ſtate of man is capable of performing within itſelf, almoſt every thing neceſſary to its protection and government, it will be proper, on the other hand, to take a review of the preſent old governments, and examine whether their principles and practice are correſpondent thereto.

CHAP. II.

CHAP. II.

OF THE ORIGIN OF THE PRESENT OLD GOVERNMENTS.

IT is impoſſible that ſuch governments as have hitherto exiſted in the world, could have commenced by any other means than a total violation of every principle ſacred and moral. The obſcurity in which the origin of all the preſent old governments is buried, implies the iniquity and diſgrace with which they began. The origin of the preſent government of America and France will ever be remembered, becauſe it is honourable to record it; but with reſpect to the reſt, even Flattery has conſigned them to the tomb of time, without an inſcription.

It could have been no difficult thing in the early and ſolitary ages of the world, while the chief employment of men was that of attending flocks and herds, for a banditti of ruffians to overrun a country, and lay it under contributions. Their power being thus eſtabliſhed, the chief of the band contrived to loſe the name of Robber in that of Monarch; and hence the origin of Monarchy and Kings.

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The origin of the government of England, ſo far as relates to what is called its line of monarchy, being one of the lateſt, is perhaps the beſt recorded. The hatred which the Norman invaſion and tyranny begat, muſt have been deeply rooted in the nation, to have outlived the contrivance to obliterate it. Though not a courtier will talk of the curfeu-bell, not a village in England has forgotten it.

Thoſe bands of robbers having parcelled out the world, and divided it into dominions, began, as is naturally the caſe, to quarrel with each other. What at firſt was obtained by violence, was conſidered by others as lawful to be taken, and a ſecond plunderer ſucceeded the firſt. They alternately invaded the dominions which each had aſſigned to himſelf, and the brutality with which they treated each other explains the original character of monarchy. It was ruffian torturing ruffian. The conqueror conſidered the conquered, not as his priſoner, but his property. He led him in triumph rattling in chains, and doomed him, at pleaſure, to ſlavery or death. As time obliterated the hiſtory of their beginning, their ſucceſſors aſſumed new appearances, to cut off the entail of their diſgrace, but their principles and objects remained the ſame. What at firſt was plunder, aſſumed the ſofter name of revenue; and the power originally uſurped, they affected to inherit.

From ſuch beginning of governments, what could be expected, but a continual ſyſtem of war and extortion? It has eſtabliſhed itſelf into a trade. The vice is not peculiar to one more than to

to another, but is the common principle of all. There does not exiſt within ſuch governments, a ſtamina whereon to ingraft reformation; and the ſhorteſt and moſt effectual remedy is to begin anew.

What ſcenes of horror, what perfection of iniquity, preſent themſelves in contemplating the character, and reviewing the hiſtory of ſuch governments! If we would delineate human nature with a baſeneſs of heart, and hypocriſy of countenance, that reflection would ſhudder at and humanity diſown, it is kings, courts, and cabinets, that muſt ſit for the portrait. Man, naturally as he is, with all his faults about him, is not up to the character.

Can we poſſibly ſuppoſe that if governments had originated in a right principle, and had not an intereſt in purſuing a wrong one, that the world could have been in the wretched and quarrelſome condition we have ſeen it? What inducement has the farmer, while following the plough, to lay aſide his peaceful purſuits, and go to war with the farmer of another country? or what inducement has the manufacturer? What is dominion to them, or to any claſs of men in a nation? Does it add an acre to any man's eſtate, or raiſe its value? Are not conqueſt and defeat each of the ſame price, and taxes the never-failing conſequence?—Though this reaſoning may be good to a nation, it is not ſo to a government. War is the Pharo table of governments, and nations the dupes of the game.

If there is any thing to wonder at in this miſerable ſcene of governments, more than might be expected, it is the progreſs which the peaceful arts of agriculture, manufacture and commerce have made, beneath ſuch a long accumulating load of diſcouragement and oppreſſion. It ſerves to ſhew, that inſtinct in animals does not act with ſtronger impulſe, than the principles of ſociety and civilization operate in man. Under all diſcouragements, he purſues his object, and yields to nothing but impoſſibilities.

CHAP. III.

CHAP. III.

OF THE OLD AND NEW SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT.

NOTHING can appear more contradictory than the principles on which the old governments began, and the condition to which ſociety, civilization, and commerce, are capable of carrying mankind. Government on the old ſyſtem, is an aſſumption of power, for the aggrandiſement of itſelf; on the new, a delegation of power, for the common benefit of ſociety. The former ſupports itſelf by keeping up a ſyſtem of war; the latter promotes a ſyſtem of peace, as the true means of enriching a nation. The one encourages national prejudices; the other promotes univerſal ſociety, as the means of univerſal commerce. The one meaſures its proſperity, by the quantity of revenue it extorts; the other proves its excellence, by the ſmall quantity of taxes it requires.

Mr. Burke has talked of old and new whigs. If he can amuſe himſelf with childiſh names and diſtinctions, I ſhall not interrupt his pleaſure. It is not to him, but to the Abbé Sieyes, that I addreſs this chapter. I am already engaged to

the latter gentleman, to diſcuſs the ſubject of monarchical government; and as it naturally occurs in comparing the old and new ſyſtems, I make this the opportunity of preſenting to him my obſervations. I ſhall occaſionally take Mr. Burke in my way.

Though it might be proved that the ſyſtem of government now called the NEW, is the moſt ancient in principle of all that have exiſted, being founded on the original inherent Rights of Man: yet, as tyranny and the ſword have ſuſpended the exerciſe of thoſe rights for many centuries paſt, it ſerves better the purpoſe of diſtinction to call it the *new*, than to claim the right of calling it the old.

The firſt general diſtinction between thoſe two ſyſtems, is, that the one now called the old is *hereditary*, either in whole or in part; and the new is entirely *repreſentative*. It rejects all hereditary government:

Firſt, As being an impoſition on mankind.

Secondly, As inadequate to the purpoſes for which government is neceſſary.

With reſpect to the firſt of theſe heads—It cannot be proved by what right hereditary government could begin: neither does there exiſt within the compaſs of mortal power, a right to eſtabliſh it. Man has no authority over poſterity in matters of perſonal right; and therefore, no man, or body of men, had, or can have, a right to ſet up hereditary government. Were even ourſelves to come again into exiſtence, inſtead of being ſucceeded by poſterity, we have not now the right of taking from ourſelves the rights

which would then be ours. On what ground, then, do we pretend to take them from others?

All hereditary government is in its nature tyranny. An heritable crown, or an heritable throne, or by what other fanciful name ſuch things may be called, have no other ſignificant explanation than that mankind are heritable property. To inherit a government, is to inherit the people, as if they were flocks and herds.

With reſpect to the ſecond head, that of being inadequate to the purpoſes for which government is neceſſary, we have only to conſider what government eſſentially is, and compare it with the circumſtances to which hereditary ſucceſſion is ſubject.

Government ought to be a thing always in full maturity. It ought to be ſo conſtructed as to be ſuperior to all the accidents to which individual man is ſubject; and therefore, hereditary ſucceſſion, by being *ſubject to them all*, is the moſt irregular and imperfect of all the ſyſtems of government.

We have heard the *Rights of Man* called a *levelling* ſyſtem; but the only ſyſtem to which the word *levelling* is truly applicable, is the hereditary monarchical ſyſtem. It is a ſyſtem of *mental levelling*. It indiſcriminately admits every ſpecies of character to the ſame authority. Vice and virtue, ignorance and wiſdom, in ſhort, every quality, good or bad, is put on the ſame level. Kings ſucceed each other, not as rationals, but as animals. It ſignifies not what their mental or moral characters are. Can we then be ſurpriſed

at the abject ſtate of the human mind in monarchical countries, when the government itſelf is formed on ſuch an abject levelling ſyſtem?—It has no fixed character. To day it is one thing; to-morrow it is ſomething elſe. It changes with the temper of every ſucceeding individual, and is ſubject to all the varieties of each. It is government through the medium of paſſions and accidents. It appears under all the various characters of childhood, decrepitude, dotage, a thing at nurſe, in leading-ſtrings, or in crutches. It reverſes the wholeſome order of nature. It occaſionally puts children over men, and the conceits of non-age over wiſdom and experience. In ſhort, we cannot conceive a more ridiculous figure of government, than hereditary ſucceſſion, in all its caſes, preſents.

Could it be made a decree in nature, or an edict regiſtered in heaven, and man could know it, that virtue and wiſdom ſhould invariably appertain to hereditary ſucceſſion, the objections to it would be removed; but when we ſee that nature acts as if ſhe diſowned and ſported with the hereditary ſyſtem; that the mental characters of ſucceſſors, in all countries, are below the average of human underſtanding; that one is a tyrant, another an ideot, a third inſane, and ſome all three together, it is impoſſible to attach confidence to it, when reaſon in man has power to act.

It is not to the Abbé Sieyes that I need apply this reaſoning; he has already ſaved me that trouble, by giving his own opinion upon the caſe. "If it

"be

"be aſked," ſays he, "what is my opinion with "reſpect to hereditary right, I anſwer, without "heſitation, That, in good theory, an hereditary "tranſmiſſion of any power or office, can never "accord with the laws of a true repreſentation. "Hereditaryſhip is, in this ſenſe, as much an "attaint upon principle, as an outrage upon ſo-"ciety. But let us," continues he, "refer to the "hiſtory of all elective monarchies and principali-"ties: Is there one in which the elective mode is "not worſe than the hereditary ſucceſſion?"

As to debating on which is the worſt of the two, is admitting both to be bad; and herein we are agreed. The preference which the Abbé has given, is a condemnation of the thing that he prefers. Such a mode of reaſoning on ſuch a ſubject is inadmiſſible, becauſe it finally amounts to an accuſation upon Providence, as if ſhe had left to man no other choice with reſpect to government than between two evils, the beſt of which he admits to be "*an attaint upon principle, and an outrage upon ſociety.*"

Paſſing over, for the preſent, all the evils and miſchiefs which monarchy has occaſioned in the world, nothing can more effectually prove its uſeleſsneſs in a ſtate of *civil government*, than making it hereditary. Would we make any office hereditary that required wiſdom and abilities to fill it? and where wiſdom and abilities are not neceſſary, ſuch an office, whatever it may be, is ſuperfluous or inſignificant.

Hereditary ſucceſſion is a burleſque upon monarchy. It puts it in the moſt ridiculous

light, by preſenting it as an office which any child or ideot may fill. It requires ſome talents to be a common mechanic; but, to be a king, requires only the animal figure of man—a ſort of breathing automaton. This ſort of ſuperſtition may laſt a few years more, but it cannot long reſiſt the awakened reaſon and intereſt of man.

As to Mr. Burke, he is a ſtickler for monarchy, not altogether as a penſioner, if he is one, which I believe, but as a political man. He has taken up a contemptible opinion of mankind, who, in their turn, are taking up the ſame of him. He conſiders them as a herd of beings that muſt be governed by fraud, effigy and ſhew; and an idol would be as good a figure of monarchy with him, as a man. I will, however, do him the juſtice to ſay, that, with reſpect to America, he has been very complimentary. He always contended, at leaſt in my hearing, that the people of America were more enlightened than thoſe of England, or of any country in Europe; and that therefore the impoſition of ſhew was not neceſſary in their governments.

Though the compariſon between hereditary and elective monarchy, which the Abbé has made, is unneceſſary to the caſe, becauſe the repreſentative ſyſtem rejects both; yet, were I to make the compariſon, I ſhould decide contrary to what he has done.

The civil wars which have originated from conteſted hereditary claims, are more numerous, and have been more dreadful, and of longer continuance, than thoſe which have been occaſioned by election.

election. All the civil wars in France arose from the hereditary system; they were either produced by hereditary claims, or by the imperfection of the hereditary form, which admits of regencies, or monarchy at nurse. With respect to England, its history is full of the same misfortunes. The contests for succession between the Houses of York and Lancaster, lasted a whole century; and others of a similar nature, have renewed themselves since that period. Those of 1715 and 1745, were of the same kind. The succession war for the crown of Spain, embroiled almost half Europe. The disturbances in Holland are generated from the hereditary ship of the Stadtholder. A government calling itself free, with an hereditary office, is like a thorn in the flesh, that produces a fermentation which endeavours to discharge it.

But I might go further, and place also foreign wars, of whatever kind, to the same cause. It is by adding the evil of hereditary succession to that of monarchy, that a permanent family-interest is created, whose constant objects are dominion and revenue. Poland, though an elective monarchy, has had fewer wars than those which are hereditary; and it is the only government that has made a voluntary essay, though but a small one, to reform the condition of the country.

Having thus glanced at a few of the defects of the old, or hereditary systems of government, let us compare it with the new, or representative system.

The representative system takes society and civilization for its basis; nature, reason, and experience, for its guide.

Experience,

Experience, in all ages, and in all countries, has demonſtrated, that it is impoſſible to controul Nature in her diſtribution of mental powers. She gives them as ſhe pleaſes. Whatever is the rule by which ſhe, apparently to us, ſcatters them among mankind, that rule remains a ſecret to man. It would be as ridiculous to attempt to fix the hereditaryſhip of human beauty, as of wiſdom. Whatever wiſdom conſtituently is, it is like a ſeedleſs plant; it may be reared when it appears, but it cannot be voluntarily produced. There is always a ſufficiency ſomewhere in the general maſs of ſociety for all purpoſes; but with reſpect to the parts of ſociety, it is continually changing its place. It riſes in one to-day, in another to-morrow, and has moſt probably viſited in rotation every family of the earth, and again withdrawn.

As this is the order of nature, the order of government muſt neceſſarily follow it, or government will, as we ſee it does, degenerate into ignorance. The hereditary ſyſtem, therefore, is as repugnant to human wiſdom, as to human rights; and is as abſurd, as it is unjuſt.

As the republic of letters brings forward the beſt literary productions, by giving to genius a fair and univerſal chance; ſo the repreſentative ſyſtem of government is calculated to produce the wiſeſt laws, by collecting wiſdom from where it can be found. I ſmile to myſelf when I contemplate the ridiculous inſignificance into which literature and all the ſciences would ſink, were they made hereditary; and I carry the ſame idea into governments. An hereditary governor is as inconſiſtent as an hereditary

hereditary author. I know not whether Homer or Euclid had ſons: but I will venture an opinion, that if they had, and had left their works unfiniſhed, thoſe ſons could not have completed them.

Do we need a ſtronger evidence of the abſurdity of hereditary government, than is ſeen in the deſcendants of thoſe men, in any line of life, who once were famous? Is there ſcarcely an inſtance in which there is not a total reverſe of the character? It appears as if the tide of mental faculties flowed as far as it could in certain channels, and then forſook its courſe, and aroſe in others. How irrational then is the hereditary ſyſtem which eſtabliſhes channels of power, in company with which wiſdom refuſes to flow! By continuing this abſurdity, man is perpetually in contradiction with himſelf; he accepts, for a king, or a chief magiſtrate, or a legiſlator, a perſon whom he would not elect for a conſtable.

It appears to general obſervation, that revolutions create genius and talents; but thoſe events do no more than bring them forward. There is exiſting in man, a maſs of ſenſe lying in a dormant ſtate, and which, unleſs ſomething excites it to action, will deſcend with him, in that condition, to the grave. As it is to the advantage of ſociety that the whole of its faculties ſhould be employed, the conſtruction of government ought to be ſuch as to bring forward, by a quiet and regular operation, all that extent of capacity which never fails to appear in revolutions.

This cannot take place in the inſipid ſtate of

hereditary government, not only becauſe it prevents, but becauſe it operates to benumb. When the mind of a nation is bowed down by any political ſuperſtition in its government, ſuch as hereditary ſucceſſion is, it loſes a conſiderable portion of its powers on all other ſubjects and objects. Hereditary ſucceſſion requires the ſame obedience to ignorance, as to wiſdom; and when once the mind can bring itſelf to pay this indiſcriminate reverence, it deſcends below the ſtature of mental manhood. It is fit to be great only in little things. It acts a treachery upon itſelf, and ſuffocates the ſenſations that urge to detection.

Though the ancient governments preſent to us a miſerable picture of the condition of man, there is one which above all others exempts itſelf from the general deſcription. I mean the democracy of the Athenians. We ſee more to admire, and leſs to condemn, in that great, extraordinary people, than in any thing which hiſtory affords.

Mr. Burke is ſo little acquainted with conſtituent principles of government, that he confounds democracy and repreſentation together. Repreſentation was a thing unknown in the ancient democracies. In thoſe the maſs of the people met and enacted laws (grammatically ſpeaking) in the firſt perſon. Simple democracy was no other than the common-hall of the ancients. It ſignifies the *form*, as well as the public principle of the government. As theſe democracies increaſed in population, and the territory extended, the ſimple democratical

democratical form became unwieldy and impracticable; and as the ſyſtem of repreſentation was not known, the conſequence was, they either degenerated convulſively into monarchies, or became abſorbed into ſuch as then exiſted. Had the ſyſtem of repreſentation been then underſtood, as it now is, there is no reaſon to believe that thoſe forms of government, now called monarchical or ariſtocratical, would ever have taken place. It was the want of ſome method to conſolidate the parts of ſociety, after it became too populous, and too extenſive for the ſimple democratical form, and alſo the lax and ſolitary condition of ſhepherds and herdſmen in other parts of the world, that afforded opportunities to thoſe unnatural modes of government to begin.

As it is neceſſary to clear away the rubbiſh of errors, into which the ſubject of government has been thrown, I ſhall proceed to remark on ſome others.

It has always been the political craft of courtiers and court-governments, to abuſe ſomething which they called republicaniſm; but what republicaniſm was, or is, they never attempt to explain. Let us examine a little into this caſe.

The only forms of government are, the democratical, the ariſtocratical, the monarchical, and what is now called the repreſentative.

What is called a *republic*, is not any *particular form* of government. It is wholly characteriſtical of the purport, matter, or object for which government ought to be inſtituted, and on which

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it is to be employed, RES-PUBLICA, the public affairs, or the public good; or, literally tranſlated, the *public thing*. It is a word of a good original, referring to what ought to be the character and buſineſs of government; and in this ſenſe it is naturally oppoſed to the word *monarchy*, which has a baſe original ſignification. It means arbitrary power in an individual perſon; in the exerciſe of which, *himſelf*, and not the *res-publica*, is the object.

Every government that does not act on the principle of a *Republic*, or in other words, that does not make the *res-publica* its whole and ſole object, is not a good government. Republican government is no other than government eſtabliſhed and conducted for the intereſt of the public, as well individually as collectively. It is not neceſſarily connected with any particular form, but it moſt naturally aſſociates with the repreſentative form, as being beſt calculated to ſecure the end for which a nation is at the expence of ſupporting it.

Various forms of government have affected to ſtyle themſelves a republic. Poland calls itſelf a republic, which is an hereditary ariſtocracy, with what is called an elective monarchy. Holland calls itſelf a republic, which is chiefly ariſtocratical, with an hereditary ſtadtholderſhip. But the government of America, which is wholly on the ſyſtem of repreſentation, is the only real republic in character and in practice, that now exiſts. Its government has no other object than the public buſineſs of the nation, and therefore it is properly

a republic;

a republic; and the Americans have taken care that THIS, and no other, ſhall always be the object of their government, by their rejecting every thing hereditary, and eſtabliſhing government on the ſyſtem of repreſentation only.

Thoſe who have ſaid that a republic is not a *form* of government calculated for countries of great extent, miſtook, in the firſt place, the *buſineſs* of a government, for a *form* of government; for the *res-publica* equally appertains to every extent of territory and population. And, in the ſecond place, if they meant any thing with reſpect to *form*, it was the ſimple democratical form, ſuch as was the mode of government in the ancient democracies, in which there was no repreſentation. The caſe, therefore, is not, that a republic cannot be extenſive, but that it cannot be extenſive on the ſimple democratical form; and the queſtion naturally preſents itſelf, *What is the beſt form of government for conducting the* RES-PUBLICA, *or the* PUBLIC BUSINESS *of a nation, after it becomes too extenſive and populous for the ſimple democratical form?*

It cannot be monarchy, becauſe monarchy is ſubject to an objection of the ſame amount to which the ſimple democratical form was ſubject.

It is poſſible that an individual may lay down a ſyſtem of principles, on which government ſhall be conſtitutionally eſtabliſhed to any extent of territory. This is no more than an operation of the mind, acting by its own powers. But the practice upon thoſe principles, as applying to the various

various and numerous circumſtances of a nation, its agriculture, manufacture, trade, commerce, &c. &c. requires a knowledge of a different kind, and which can be had only from the various parts of ſociety. It is an aſſemblage of practical knowledge, which no one individual can poſſeſs; and therefore the monarchical form is as much limited, in uſeful practice, from the incompetency of knowledge, as was the democratical form, from the multiplicity of population. The one degenerates, by extenſion, into confuſion; the other, into ignorance and incapacity, of which all the great monarchies are an evidence. The monarchical form, therefore, could not be a ſubſtitute for the democratical, becauſe it has equal inconveniences.

Much leſs could it when made hereditary. This is the moſt effectual of all forms to preclude knowledge. Neither could the high democratical mind have voluntarily yielded itſelf to be governed by children and idiots, and all the motley inſignificance of character, which attends ſuch a mere animal-ſyſtem, the diſgrace and the reproach of reaſon and of man.

As to the ariſtocratical form, it has the ſame vices and defects with the monarchical, except that the chance of abilities is better from the proportion of numbers, but there is ſtill no ſecurity for the right uſe and application of them*.

Referring, then, to the original ſimple democracy,

* For a character of ariſtocracy, the reader is referred to *Rights of Man*, Part I. page 70.

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it affords the true data from which government on a large ſcale can begin. It is incapable of extenſion, not from its principle, but from the inconvenience of its form; and monarchy and ariſtocracy, from their incapacity. Retaining, then, democracy as the ground, and rejecting the corrupt ſyſtems of monarchy and ariſtocracy, the repreſentative ſyſtem naturally preſents itſelf; remedying at once the defects of the ſimple democracy as to form, and the incapacity of the other two with reſpect to knowledge.

Simple democracy was ſociety governing itſelf without the aid of ſecondary means. By ingrafting repreſentation upon democracy, we arrive at a ſyſtem of government capable of embracing and confederating all the various intereſts and every extent of territory and population; and that alſo with advantages as much ſuperior to hereditary government, as the republic of letters is to hereditary literature.

It is on this ſyſtem that the American government is founded. It is repreſentation ingrafted upon democracy. It has fixed the form by a ſcale parallel in all caſes to the extent of the principle. What Athens was in miniature, America will be in magnitude. The one was the wonder of the ancient world; the other is becoming the admiration and model of the preſent. It is the eaſieſt of all the forms of government to be underſtood, and the moſt eligible in practice; and excludes at once the ignorance and inſecurity of the hereditary mode, and the inconvenience of the ſimple democracy.

It is impoſſible to conceive a ſyſtem of government capable of acting over ſuch an extent of territory, and ſuch a circle of intereſts, as is immediately produced by the operation of repreſentation. France, great and populous as it is, is but a ſpot in the capaciouſneſs of the ſyſtem. It adapts itſelf to all poſſible caſes. It is preferable to ſimple democracy even in ſmall territories. Athens, by repreſentation, would have outrivalled her own democracy.

That which is called government, or rather that which we ought to conceive government to be, is no more than ſome common center, in which all the parts of ſociety unite. This cannot be accompliſhed by any method ſo conducive to the various intereſts of the community, as by the repreſentative ſyſtem. It concentrates the knowledge neceſſary to the intereſt of the parts, and of the whole. It places government in a ſtate of conſtant maturity. It is, as has been already obſerved, never young, never old. It is ſubject neither to nonage, nor dotage. It is never in the cradle, nor on crutches. It admits not of a ſeparation between knowledge and power, and is ſuperior, as government always ought to be, to all the accidents of individual man, and is therefore ſuperior to what is called monarchy.

A nation is not a body, the figure of which is to be repreſented by the human body; but is like a body contained within a circle, having a common center, in which every radius meets; and that center is formed by repreſentation. To connect repre-

repreſentation with what is called monarchy, is eccentric government. Repreſentation is of itſelf the delegated monarchy of a nation, and cannot debaſe itſelf by dividing it with another.

Mr. Burke has two or three times, in his parliamentary ſpeeches, and in his publications, made uſe of a jingle of words that convey no ideas. Speaking of government, he ſays, "It is better "to have monarchy for its baſis, and republican-"iſm for its corrective, than republicaniſm for its "baſis, and monarchy for its corrective."—If he means that it is better to correct folly with wiſdom, than wiſdom with folly, I will no otherwiſe contend with him, than that it would be much better to reject the folly entirely.

But what is this thing which Mr. Burke calls monarchy? Will he explain it? All men can underſtand what repreſentation is; and that it muſt neceſſarily include a variety of knowledge and talents. But, what ſecurity is there for the ſame qualities on the part of monarchy? or, when this monarchy is a child, where then is the wiſdom? What does it know about government? Who then is the monarch, or where is the monarchy? If it is to be performed by regency, it proves it to be a farce. A regency is a mock ſpecies of republic, and the whole of monarchy deſerves no better deſcription. It is a thing as various as imagination can paint. It has none of the ſtable character that government ought to poſſeſs. Every ſucceſſion is a revolution, and every regency a counter-revolution. The whole of it is a ſcene of perpetual court

cabal and intrigue, of which Mr. Burke is himſelf an inſtance. To render monarchy conſiſtent with government, the next in ſucceſſion ſhould not be born a child, but a man at once, and that man a Solomon. It is ridiculous that nations are to wait, and government be interrupted, till boys grow to be men.

Whether I have too little ſenſe to ſee, or too much to be impoſed upon; whether I have too much or too little pride, or of any thing elſe, I leave out of the queſtion; but certain it is, that what is called monarchy, always appears to me a ſilly, contemptible thing. I compare it to ſomething kept behind a curtain, about which there is a great deal of buſtle and fuſs, and a wonderful air of ſeeming ſolemnity; but when, by any accident, the curtain happens to be open, and the company ſee what it is, they burſt into laughter.

In the repreſentative ſyſtem of government, nothing of this can happen. Like the nation itſelf, it poſſeſſes a perpetual ſtamina, as well of body as of mind, and preſents itſelf on the open theatre of the world in a fair and manly manner. Whatever are its excellences or its defects, they are viſible to all. It exiſts not by fraud and myſtery; it deals not in cant and ſophiſtry; but inſpires a language, that, paſſing from heart to heart, is felt and underſtood.

We muſt ſhut our eyes againſt reaſon, we muſt baſely degrade our underſtanding, not to ſee the folly of what is called monarchy. Nature is orderly in all her works; but this is a mode of

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government that counteracts nature. It turns the the progreſs of the human faculties upſide down. It ſubjects age to be governed by children, and wiſdom by folly.

On the contrary, the repreſentative ſyſtem is always parallel with the order and immutable laws of nature, and meets the reaſon of man in every part. For example:

In the American federal government, more power is delegated to the Preſident of the United States, than to any other individual member of congreſs. He cannot, therefore, be elected to this office under the age of thirty-five years. By this time the judgment of man becomes matured, and he has lived long enough to be acquainted with men and things, and the country with him.—But on the monarchical plan, (excluſive of the numerous chances there are againſt every man born into the world, of drawing a prize in the lottery of human faculties), the next in ſucceſſion, whatever he may be, is put at the head of a nation, and of a government, at the age of eighteen years. Does this appear like an act of wiſdom? Is it conſiſtent with the proper dignity and the manly character of a nation? Where is the propriety of calling ſuch a lad the father of the people?—In all other caſes, a perſon is a minor until the age of twenty-one years. Before this period, he is not truſted with the management of an acre of land, or with the heritable property of a flock of ſheep, or an herd of ſwine; but, wonderful to tell! he may, at the age of eighteen years, be truſted with a nation.

That monarchy is all a bubble, a mere court artifice to procure money, is evident, (at leaſt to me), in every character in which it can be viewed. It would be impoſſible, on the rational ſyſtem of repreſentative government, to make out a bill of expences to ſuch an enormous amount as this deception admits. Government is not of itſelf a very chargeable inſtitution. The whole expence of the federal government of America, founded, as I have already ſaid, on the ſyſtem of repreſentation, and extending over a country nearly ten times as large as England, is but ſix hundred thouſand dollars, or one hundred and thirty-five thouſand pounds ſterling.

I preſume, that no man in his ſober ſenſes, will compare the character of any of the kings of Europe with that of General Waſhington. Yet, in France, and alſo in England, the expence of the civil liſt only, for the ſupport of one man, is eight times greater than the whole expence of the federal government in America. To aſſign a reaſon for this, appears almoſt impoſſible. The generality of people in America, eſpecially the poor, are more able to pay taxes, than the generality of people either in France or England.

But the caſe is, that the repreſentative ſyſtem diffuſes ſuch a body of knowledge throughout a nation, on the ſubject of government, as to explode ignorance and preclude impoſition. The craft of courts cannot be acted on that ground. There is no place for myſtery; no where for it to begin. Thoſe who are not in the repreſentation, know as much of the nature of buſineſs as thoſe who

who are. An affectation of myſterious importance would there be ſcouted. Nations can have no ſecrets; and the ſecrets of courts, like thoſe of individuals, are always their defects.

In the repreſentative ſyſtem, the reaſon for every thing muſt publicly appear. Every man is a proprietor in government, and conſiders it a neceſſary part of his buſineſs to underſtand. It concerns his intereſt, becauſe it affects his property. He examines the coſt, and compares it with the advantages; and above all, he does not adopt the ſlaviſh cuſtom of following what in other governments are called LEADERS.

It can only be by blinding the underſtanding of man, and making him believe that government is ſome wonderful myſterious thing, that exceſſive revenues are obtained. Monarchy is well calculated to enſure this end. It is the popery of government; a thing kept up to amuſe the ignorant, and quiet them into taxes.

The government of a free country, properly ſpeaking, is not in the perſons, but in the laws. The enacting of thoſe requires no great expence; and when they are adminiſtered, the whole of civil government is performed—the reſt is all court contrivance.

CHAP. IV.

OF CONSTITUTIONS.

THAT men mean diſtinct and ſeparate things when they ſpeak of conſtitutions and of governments, is evident; or, why are thoſe terms diſtinctly and ſeparately uſed? A conſtitution is not the act of a government, but of a people conſtituting a government; and government without a conſtitution, is power without a right.

All power exerciſed over a nation, muſt have ſome beginning. It muſt be either delegated, or aſſumed. There are no other ſources. All delegated power is truſt, and all aſſumed power is uſurpation. Time does not alter the nature and quality of either.

In viewing this ſubject, the caſe and circumſtances of America preſent themſelves as in the beginning of a world; and our enquiry into the origin of government is ſhortened, by referring to the facts that have ariſen in our own day. We have no occaſion to roam for information into the obſcure field of antiquity, nor hazard ourſelves upon conjecture. We are brought at once to the point of ſeeing government begin, as if we had lived in the beginning of time. The real volume, not of

hiſtory,

hiſtory, but of facts, is directly before us, unmutilated by contrivance, or the errors of tradition.

I will here conciſely ſtate the commencement of the American conſtitutions; by which the difference between conſtitutions and governments will ſufficiently appear.

It may not be improper to remind the reader, that the United States of America conſiſt of thirteen ſeparate ſtates, each of which eſtabliſhed a government for itſelf, after the declaration of independence, done the fourth of July 1776. Each ſtate acted independently of the reſt, in forming its government; but the ſame general principle pervades the whole. When the ſeveral ſtate governments were formed, they proceeded to form the federal government, that acts over the whole in all matters which concern the intereſt of the whole, or which relate to the intercourſe of the ſeveral ſtates with each other, or with foreign nations. I will begin with giving an inſtance from one of the ſtate governments, (that of Pennſylvania), and then proceed to the federal government.

The ſtate of Pennſylvania, though nearly of the ſame extent of territory as England, was then divided into only twelve counties. Each of thoſe counties had elected a committee at the commencement of the diſpute with the Engliſh government; and as the city of Philadelphia, which alſo had its committee, was the moſt central for intelligence, it became the center of communication to the ſeveral county committees.

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When it became neceſſary to proceed to the formation of a government, the committee of Philadelphia propoſed a conference of all the county committees, to be held in that city, and which met the latter end of July 1776.

Though theſe committees had been elected by the people, they were not elected expreſsly for the purpoſe, nor inveſted with the authority, of forming a conſtitution; and as they could not, conſiſtently with the American idea of rights, aſſume ſuch a power, they could only confer upon the matter, and put it into a train of operation. The conferrees, therefore, did no more than ſtate the caſe, and recommend to the ſeveral counties to elect ſix repreſentatives for each county, to meet in convention at Philadelphia, with powers to form a conſtitution, and propoſe it for public conſideration.

This convention, of which Benjamin Franklin was preſident, having met and deliberated, and agreed upon a conſtitution, they next ordered it to be publiſhed, not as a thing eſtabliſhed, but for the conſideration of the whole people, their approbation or rejection, and then adjourned to a ſtated time. When the time of adjournment was expired, the convention re-aſſembled; and as the general opinion of the people in approbation of it was then known, the conſtitution was ſigned, ſealed, and proclaimed on the *authority of the people* and the original inſtrument depoſited as a public record. The convention then appointed a day for the general election of the repreſentatives who were to compoſe the government,

government, and the time it ſhould commence; and having done this, they diſſolved, and returned to their ſeveral homes and occupations.

In this conſtitution were laid down, firſt, a declaration of rights. Then followed the form which the government ſhould have, and the powers it ſhould poſſeſs—the authority of the courts of judicature, and of juries—the manner in which elections ſhould be conducted, and the proportion of repreſentatives to the number of electors—the time which each ſucceeding aſſembly ſhould continue, which was one year—the mode of levying, and of accounting for the expenditure, of public money—of appointing public officers, &c. &c. &c.

No article of this conſtitution could be altered or infringed at the diſcretion of the government that was to enſue. It was to that government a law. But as it would have been unwiſe to preclude the benefit of experience, and in order alſo to prevent the accumulation of errors, if any ſhould be found, and to preſerve an uniſon of government with the circumſtances of the ſtate at all times, the conſtitution provided, that, at the expiration of every ſeven years, a convention ſhould be elected, for the expreſs purpoſe of reviſing the conſtitution, and making alterations, additions, or abolitions therein, if any ſuch ſhould be found neceſſary.

Here we ſee a regular proceſs—a government iſſuing out of a conſtitution, formed by the people in their original character; and that conſtitution ſerving, not only as an authority, but as

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a law of controul to the government. It was the political bible of the ſtate. Scarcely a family was without it. Every member of the government had a copy; and nothing was more common, when any debate aroſe on the principle of a bill, or on the extent of any ſpecies of authority, than for the members to take the printed conſtitution out of their pocket, and read the chapter with which ſuch matter in debate was connected.

Having thus given an inſtance from one of the ſtates, I will ſhew the proceedings by which the federal conſtitution of the United States aroſe and was formed.

Congreſs, at its two firſt meetings, in September 1774, and May 1775, was nothing more than a deputation from the legiſlatures of the ſeveral provinces, afterwards ſtates; and had no other authority than what aroſe from common conſent, and the neceſſity of its acting as a public body. In every thing which related to the internal affairs of America, congreſs went no further than to iſſue recommendations to the ſeveral provincial aſſemblies, who at diſcretion adopted them or not. Nothing on the part of congreſs was compulſive; yet, in this ſituation, it was more faithfully and affectionately obeyed, than was any government in Europe. This inſtance, like that of the national aſſembly in France, ſufficiently ſhews, that the ſtrength of government does not conſiſt in any thing *within* itſelf, but in the attachment of a nation, and the intereſt which the people feel in ſupporting it. When this

is loſt, government is but a child in power; and though, like the old government of France, it may harraſs individuals for a while, it but facilitates its own fall.

After the declaration of independence, it became conſiſtent with the principle on which repreſentative government is founded, that the authority of congreſs ſhould be defined and eſtabliſhed. Whether that authority ſhould be more or leſs than congreſs then diſcretionarily exerciſed, was not the queſtion. It was merely the rectitude of the meaſure.

For this purpoſe, the act, called the act of confederation, (which was a ſort of imperfect federal conſtitution), was propoſed, and, after long deliberation, was concluded in the year 1781. It was not the act of congreſs, becauſe it is repugnant to the principles of repreſentative government that a body ſhould give power to itſelf. Congreſs firſt informed the ſeveral ſtates, of the powers which it conceived were neceſſary to be inveſted in the union, to enable it to perform the duties and ſervices required from it; and the ſtates ſeverally agreed with each other, and concenterated in congreſs thoſe powers.

It may not be improper to obſerve, that in both thoſe inſtances, (the one of Pennſylvania, and the other of the United States), there is no ſuch thing as the idea of a compact between the people on one ſide, and the government on the other. The compact was that of the people with each other, to produce and conſtitute a government.

government. To ſuppoſe that any government can be a party in a compact with the whole people, is to ſuppoſe it to have exiſtence before it can have a right to exiſt. The only inſtance in which a compact can take place between the people and thoſe who exerciſe the government, is, that the people ſhall pay them, while they chuſe to employ them.

Government is not a trade which any man or body of men has a right to ſet up and exerciſe for his own emolument, but is altogether a truſt, in right of thoſe by whom that truſt is delegated, and by whom it is always reſumeable. It has of itſelf no rights; they are altogether duties.

Having thus given two inſtances of the original formation of a conſtitution, I will ſhew the manner in which both have been changed ſince their firſt eſtabliſhment.

The powers veſted in the governments of the ſeveral ſtates, by the ſtate conſtitutions, were found, upon experience, to be too great; and thoſe veſted in the federal government, by the act of confederation, too little. The defect was not in the principle, but in the diſtribution of power.

Numerous publications, in pamphlets and in the newſpapers, appeared, on the propriety and neceſſity of new modelling the federal government. After ſome time of public diſcuſſion, carried on through the channel of the preſs, and in converſations, the ſtate of Virginia, experiencing ſome inconvenience with reſpect to commerce, propoſed holding a continental conference; in conſe-

quence of which, a deputation from five or ſix of the ſtate aſſemblies met at Anapolis in Maryland, in 1786. This meeting, not conceiving itſelf ſufficiently authoriſed to go into the buſineſs of a reform, did no more than ſtate their general opinions of the propriety of the meaſure, and recommend that a convention of all the ſtates ſhould be held the year following.

This convention met at Philadelphia in May 1787, of which General Waſhington was elected preſident. He was not at that time connected with any of the ſtate governments, or with congreſs. He delivered up his commiſſion when the war ended, and ſince then had lived a private citizen.

The convention went deeply into all the ſubjects; and having, after a variety of debate and inveſtigation, agreed among themſelves upon the ſeveral parts of a federal conſtitution, the next queſtion was, the manner of giving it authority and practice.

For this purpoſe, they did not, like a cabal of courtiers, ſend for a Dutch Stadtholder, or a German Elector; but they referred the whole matter to the ſenſe and intereſt of the country.

They firſt directed, that the propoſed conſtitution ſhould be publiſhed. Secondly, that each ſtate ſhould elect a convention, expreſsly for the purpoſe of taking it into conſideration, and of ratifying or rejecting it; and that as ſoon as the approbation and ratification of any nine ſtates ſhould be given, that thoſe ſtates ſhould proceed to the election of their proportion of members to

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the new federal government; and that the operation of it ſhould then begin, and the former federal government ceaſe.

The ſeveral ſtates proceeded accordingly to elect their conventions. Some of thoſe conventions ratified the conſtitution by very large majorities, and two or three unanimouſly. In others there were much debate and diviſion of opinion. In the Maſſachuſetts convention, which met at Boſton, the majority was not above nineteen or twenty, in about three hundred members; but ſuch is the nature of repreſentative government, that it quietly decides all matters by majority. After the debate in the Maſſachuſetts convention was cloſed, and the vote taken, the objecting members roſe, and declared, "*That though they had argued*
"*and voted againſt it, becauſe certain parts appeared*
"*to them in a different light to what they appeared*
"*to other members; yet, as the vote had decided in*
"*favour of the conſtitution as propoſed, they ſhould*
"*give it the ſame practical ſupport as if they had*
"*voted for it.*"

As ſoon as nine ſtates had concurred, (and the reſt followed in the order their conventions were elected), the old fabric of the federal government was taken down, and the new one erected, of which General Waſhington is preſident.—In this place I cannot help remarking, that the character and ſervices of this gentleman are ſufficient to put all thoſe men called kings to ſhame. While they are receiving from the ſweat and labours of mankind, a prodigality of pay, to which neither their abilities

abilities nor their ſervices can entitle them, he is rendering every ſervice in his power, and refuſing every pecuniary reward. He accepted no pay as commander in chief; he accepts none as preſident of the United States.

After the new federal conſtitution was eſtabliſhed, the ſtate of Pennſylvania, conceiving that ſome parts of its own conſtitution required to be altered, elected a convention for that purpoſe. The propoſed alterations were publiſhed, and the people concurring therein, they were eſtabliſhed.

In forming thoſe conſtitutions, or in altering them, little or no inconvenience took place. The ordinary courſe of things was not interrupted, and the advantages have been much. It is always the intereſt of a far greater number of people in a nation to have things right, than to let them remain wrong; and when public matters are open to debate, and the public judgment free, it will not decide wrong, unleſs it decides too haſtily.

In the two inſtances of changing the conſtitutions, the governments then in being were not actors either way. Government has no right to make itſelf a party in any debate reſpecting the principles or modes of forming, or of changing, conſtitutions. It is not for the benefit of thoſe who exerciſe the powers of government, that conſtitutions, and the governments iſſuing from them, are eſtabliſhed. In all thoſe matters, the right of judging and acting are in thoſe who pay, and not in thoſe who receive.

A conſtitution is the property of a nation, and

not of thoſe who exerciſe the government. All the conſtitutions of America are declared to be eſtabliſhed on the authority of the people. In France, the word nation is uſed inſtead of the people; but in both caſes, a conſtitution is a thing antecedent to the government, and always diſtinct therefrom.

In England, it is not difficult to perceive that every thing has a conſtitution, except the nation. Every ſociety and aſſociation that is eſtabliſhed, firſt agreed upon a number of original articles, digeſted into form, which are its conſtitution. It then appointed its officers, whoſe powers and authorities are deſcribed in that conſtitution, and the government of that ſociety then commenced. Thoſe officers, by whatever name they are called, have no authority to add to, alter, or abridge the original articles. It is only to the conſtituting power that this right belongs.

From the want of underſtanding the difference between a conſtitution and a government, Dr. Johnſon, and all writers of his deſcription, have always bewildered themſelves. They could not but perceive, that there muſt neceſſarily be a *controuling* power exiſting ſomewhere, and they placed this power in the diſcretion of the perſons exerciſing the government, inſtead of placing it in a conſtitution formed by the nation. When it is in a conſtitution, it has the nation for its ſupport, and the natural and the political controuling powers are together. The laws which are enacted by governments, controul men only as individuals,

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but the nation, through its conſtitution, controuls the whole government, and has a natural ability ſo to do. The final controuling power, therefore, and the original conſtituting power, are one and the ſame power.

Dr. Johnſon could not have advanced ſuch a poſition in any country where there was a conſtitution; and he is himſelf an evidence, that no ſuch thing as a conſtitution exiſts in England.—But it may be put as a queſtion, not improper to be inveſtigated, That if a conſtitution does not exiſt, how came the idea of its exiſtence ſo generally eſtabliſhed?

In order to decide this queſtion, it is neceſſary to conſider a conſtitution in both its caſes:—Firſt, as creating a government and giving it powers. Secondly, as regulating and reſtraining the powers ſo given.

If we begin with William of Normandy, we find that the government of England was originally a tyranny, founded on an invaſion and conqueſt of the country. This being admitted, it will then appear, that the exertion of the nation, at different periods, to abate that tyranny, and render it leſs intolerable, has been credited for a conſtitution.

Magna Charta, as it was called, (it is now like an almanack of the ſame date,) was no more than compelling the government to renounce a part of its aſſumptions. It did not create and give powers to government in the manner a conſtitution does; but was, as far as it went, of the

nature of a re-conqueſt, and not of a conſtitution; for could the nation have totally expelled the uſurpation, as France has done its deſpotiſm, it would then have had a conſtitution to form.

The hiſtory of the Edwards and the Henries, and up to the commencement of the Stuarts, exhibits as many inſtances of tyranny as could be acted within the limits to which the nation had reſtricted it. The Stuarts endeavoured to paſs thoſe limits, and their fate is well known. In all thoſe inſtances we ſee nothing of a conſtitution, but only of reſtrictions on aſſumed power.

After this, another William, deſcended from the ſame ſtock, and claiming from the ſame origin, gained poſſeſſion; and of the two evils, *James* and *William*, the nation preferred what it thought the leaſt; ſince, from circumſtances, it muſt take one. The act, called the Bill of Rights, comes here into view. What is it, but a bargain, which the parts of the government made with each other to divide powers, profits, and privileges? You ſhall have ſo much, and I will have the reſt; and with reſpect to the nation, it ſaid, for *your ſhare*, you *ſhall have the right of petitioning*. This being the caſe, the bill of rights is more properly a bill of wrongs, and of inſult. As to what is called the convention parliament, it was a thing that made itſelf, and then made the authority by which it acted. A few perſons got together, and called themſelves by that name. Several of them had never been elected, and none of them for the purpoſe.

From the time of William, a ſpecies of govern-

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ment aroſe, iſſuing out of this coalition bill of rights; and more ſo, ſince the corruption introduced at the Hanover ſucceſſion, by the agency of Walpole; that can be deſcribed by no other name than a deſpotic legiſlation. Though the parts may embarraſs each other, the whole has no bounds; and the only right it acknowledges out of itſelf, is the right of petitioning. Where then is the conſtitution either that gives or that reſtrains power?

It is not becauſe a part of the government is elective, that makes it leſs a deſpotiſm, if the perſons ſo elected, poſſeſs afterwards, as a parliament, unlimited powers. Election, in this caſe, becomes ſeparated from repreſentation, and the candidates are candidates for deſpotiſm.

I cannot believe that any nation, reaſoning on its own rights, would have thought of calling thoſe things *a conſtitution*, if the cry of conſtitution had not been ſet up by the government. It has got into circulation like the words *bore* and *quoz*, by being chalked up in the ſpeeches of parliament, as thoſe words were on window ſhutters and door poſts; but whatever the conſtitution may be in other reſpects, it has undoubtedly been *the moſt productive machine of taxation that was ever invented.* The taxes in France, under the new conſtitution, are not quite thirteen ſhillings per head*, and the taxes in England, under

* The whole amount of the aſſeſſed taxes of France, for the preſent year, is three hundred millions of livres, which is twelve

under what is called its preſent conſtitution, are forty-eight ſhillings and ſixpence per head, men, women, and children, amounting to nearly ſeventeen millions ſterling, beſides the expence of collection, which is upwards of a million more.

In a country like England, where the whole of the civil government is executed by the people of every town and county, by means of pariſh officers, magiſtrates, quarterly ſeſſions, juries, and aſſize; without any trouble to what is called the government, or any other expence to the revenue than the ſalary of the judges, it is aſtoniſhing how ſuch a maſs of taxes can be employed. Not even the internal defence of the country is paid out of the revenue. On all occaſions, whether real or contrived, recourſe is continually had to new loans and new taxes. No wonder, then, that a machine of government ſo advantageous to the advocates of a court, ſhould be ſo triumphantly extolled! No wonder, that St. James's or St. Stephen's ſhould echo with the continual cry of conſtitution! No wonder, that the French revolution ſhould be reprobated, and the *res-publica* treated with reproach! The *red*

millions and a half ſterling; and the incidental taxes are eſtimated at three millions, making in the whole fifteen millions and a half; which, among twenty-four millions of people, is not quite thirteen ſhillings per head. France has leſſened her taxes ſince the revolution, nearly nine millions ſterling annually. Before the revolution, the city of Paris paid a duty of upwards of thirty per cent. on all articles brought into the city. This tax was collected at the city gates. It was taken off on the firſt of laſt May, and the gates taken down.

book

Book of England, like the red book of France, will explain the reaſon *.

I will now, by way of relaxation, turn a thought or two to Mr. Burke. I aſk his pardon for neglecting him ſo long.

" America," ſays he, (in his ſpeech on the Canada conſtitution bill) " never dreamed of " ſuch abſurd doctrine as the *Rights of Man*."

Mr. Burke is ſuch a bold preſumer, and advances his aſſertions and his premiſes with ſuch a deficiency of judgment, that, without troubling ourſelves about principles of philoſophy or politics, the mere logical concluſions they produce, are ridiculous. For inſtance,

If governments, as Mr. Burke aſſerts, are not founded on the Rights of MAN, and are founded on *any rights* at all, they conſequently muſt be founded on the rights of *ſomething* that is *not man*. What then is that ſomething?

Generally ſpeaking, we know of no other creatures that inhabit the earth than man and beaſt; and in all caſes, where only two things offer themſelves, and one muſt be admitted, a negation proved on any one, amounts to an affirmative on the other; and therefore, Mr. Burke, by proving againſt the Rights of *Man*, proves in

* What was called the *livre rouge*, or the red book, in France, was not exactly ſimilar to the court calendar in England; but it ſufficiently ſhewed how a great part of the taxes was laviſhed.

behalf of the *beaſt*; and conſequently, proves that government is a beaſt: and as difficult things ſometimes explain each other, we now ſee the origin of keeping wild beaſts in the Tower; for they certainly can be of no other uſe than to ſhew the origin of the government. They are in the place of a conſtitution. O John Bull, what honours thou haſt loſt by not being a wild beaſt. Thou mighteſt, on Mr. Burke's ſyſtem, have been in the Tower for life.

If Mr. Burke's arguments have not weight enough to keep one ſerious, the fault is leſs mine than his; and as I am willing to make an apology to the reader for the liberty I have taken, I hope Mr. Burke will alſo make his for giving the cauſe.

Having thus paid Mr. Burke the compliment of remembering him, I return to the ſubject.

From the want of a conſtitution in England to reſtrain and regulate the wild impulſe of power, many of the laws are irrational and tyrannical, and the adminiſtration of them vague and problematical.

The attention of the government of England, (for I rather chuſe to call it by this name, than the Engliſh government) appears, ſince its political connection with Germany, to have been ſo compleatly engroſſed and abſorbed by foreign affairs, and the means of raiſing taxes, that it ſeems to exiſt for no other purpoſes. Domeſtic concerns are neglected; and, with reſpect to regular law, there is ſcarcely ſuch a thing.

Almoſt

Almoſt every caſe now muſt be determined by ſome precedent, be that precedent good or bad, or whether it properly applies or not; and the practice is become ſo general, as to ſuggeſt a ſuſpicion, that it proceeds from a deeper policy than at firſt ſight appears.

Since the revolution of America, and more ſo ſince that of France, this preaching up the doctrine of precedents, drawn from times and circumſtances antecedent to thoſe events, has been the ſtudied practice of the Engliſh government. The generality of thoſe precedents are founded on principles and opinions, the reverſe of what they ought; and the greater diſtance of time they are drawn from, the more they are to be ſuſpected. But by aſſociating thoſe precedents with a ſuperſtitious reverence for ancient things, as monks ſhew relics and call them holy, the generality of mankind are deceived into the deſign. Governments now act as if they were afraid to awaken a ſingle reflection in man. They are ſoftly leading him to the ſepulchre of precedents, to deaden his faculties and call his attention from the ſcene of revolutions. They feel that he is arriving at knowledge faſter than they wiſh, and their policy of precedents is the barometer of their fears. This political popery, like the eccleſiaſtical popery of old, has had its day, and is haſtening to its exit. The ragged relic and the antiquated precedent, the monk and the monarch, will moulder together.

Government by precedent, without any regard

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to the principle of the precedent, is one of the vileſt ſyſtems that can be ſet up. In numerous inſtances, the precedent ought to operate as a warning, and not as an example, and requires to be ſhunned inſtead of imitated; but inſtead of this, precedents are taken in the lump, and put at once for conſtitution and for law.

Either the doctrine of precedents is policy to keep man in a ſtate of ignorance, or it is a practical confeſſion that wiſdom degenerates in governments as governments increaſe in age, and can only hobble along by the ſtilts and crutches of precedents. How is it that the ſame perſons who would proudly be thought wiſer than their predeceſſors, appear at the ſame time only as the ghoſts of departed wiſdom? How ſtrangely is antiquity treated! To anſwer ſome purpoſes it is ſpoken of as the times of darkneſs and ignorance, and to anſwer others, it is put for the light of the world.

If the doctrine of precedents, is to be followed, the expences of government need not continue the ſame. Why pay men extravagantly, who have but little to do? If every thing that can happen is already in precedent, legiſlation is at an end, and precedent, like a dictionary, determines every caſe. Either, therefore, government has arrived at its dotage, and requires to be renovated, or all the occaſions for exerciſing its wiſdom have occured.

We now ſee all over Europe, and particularly in England, the curions phænomenon of a nation

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looking one way, and a government the other—the one forward and the other backward. If governments are to go on by precedent, while nations go on by improvement, they muſt at laſt come to a final ſeparation; and the ſooner, and the more civilly, they determine this point, the better *.

Having thus ſpoken of conſtitutions generally, as things diſtinct from actual governments, let us proceed to conſider the parts of which a conſtitution is compoſed.

Opinions differ more on this ſubject, than with reſpect to the whole. That a nation ought to have a conſtitution, as a rule for the conduct of its government, is a ſimple queſtion in which all men, not directly courtiers, will agree. It is only on the component parts that queſtions and opinions multiply.

* In England, the improvements in agriculture, uſeful arts, manufactures, and commerce, have been made in oppoſition to the genius of its government, which is that of following precedents. It is from the enterprize and induſtry of the individuals, and their numerous aſſociations, in which, tritely ſpeaking, government is neither pillow nor bolſter, that theſe improvements have proceeded. No man thought about the government, or who was *in*, or who was *out*, when he was planning or executing thoſe things; and all he had to hope, with reſpect to government, was, *that it would let him alone*. Three or four very ſilly miniſterial news-papers are continually offending againſt the ſpirit of national improvement, by aſcribing it to a miniſter. They may with as much truth aſcribe this book to a miniſter.

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But this difficulty, like every other, will diminiſh when put into a train of being rightly underſtood.

The firſt thing is, that a nation has a right to eſtabliſh a conſtitution.

Whether it exerciſes this right in the moſt judicious manner at firſt, is quite another caſe. It exerciſes it agreeably to the judgment it poſſeſſes; and by continuing to do ſo, all errors will at laſt be exploded.

When this right is eſtabliſhed in a nation, there is no fear that it will be employed to its own injury. A nation can have no intereſt in being wrong.

Though all the conſtitutions of America are on one general principle, yet no two of them are exactly alike in their component parts, or in the diſtribution of the powers which they give to the actual governments. Some are more, and others leſs complex.

In forming a conſtitution, it is firſt neceſſary to conſider what are the ends for which government is neceſſary? Secondly, what are the beſt means, and the leaſt expenſive, for accompliſhing thoſe ends?

Government is nothing more than a national aſſociation; and the object of this aſſociation is the good of all, as well individually as collectively. Every man wiſhes to purſue his occupation, and to enjoy the fruits of his labours, and the produce of his property in peace and ſafety, and with the leaſt poſſible expence. When theſe

things

things are accompliſhed, all the objects for which government ought to be eſtabliſhed are anſwered.

It has been cuſtomary to conſider government under three diſtinct general heads. The legiſlative, the executive, and the judicial.

But if we permit our judgment to act unincumbered by the habit of multiplied terms, we can perceive no more than two diviſions of power, of which civil government is compoſed, namely, that of legiſlating or enacting laws, and that of executing or adminiſtering them. Every thing, therefore, appertaining to civil government, claſſes itſelf under one or other of theſe two diviſions.

So far as regards the execution of the laws, that which is called the judicial power, is ſtrictly and properly the executive power of every country. It is that power to which every individual has appeal, and which cauſes the laws to be executed; neither have we any other clear idea with reſpect to the official execution of the laws. In England, and alſo in America and France, this power begins with the magiſtrate, and proceeds up through all the courts of judicature.

I leave to courtiers to explain what is meant by calling monarchy the executive power. It is merely a name in which acts of government are done; and any other, or none at all, would anſwer the ſame purpoſe. Laws have neither more nor leſs authority on this account. It muſt be from the juſtneſs of their principles, and the intereſt which a nation feels therein, that they derive ſupport; if

they require any other than this, it is a ſign that ſomething in the ſyſtem of government is imperfect. Laws difficult to be executed cannot be generally good.

With reſpect to the organization of the *legiſlative power*, different modes have been adopted in different countries. In America it is generally compoſed of two houſes. In France it conſiſts but of one, but in both countries it is wholly by repreſentation.

The caſe is, that mankind (from the long tyranny of aſſumed power) have had ſo few opportunities of making the neceſſary trials on modes and principles of government, in order to diſcover the beſt, *that government is but now beginning to be known*, and experience is yet wanting to determine many particulars.

The objections againſt two houſes are, firſt, that there is an inconſiſtency in any part of a whole legiſlature, coming to a final determination by vote on any matter, whilſt *that matter*, with reſpect to *that whole*, is yet only in a train of deliberation, and conſequently open to new illuſtrations.

Secondly, That by taking the vote on each, as a ſeparate body, it always admits of the poſſibility, and is often the caſe in practice, that the minority governs the majority, and that, in ſome inſtances, to a degree of great inconſiſtency.

Thirdly, That two houſes arbitrarily checking or controuling each other is inconſiſtent; becauſe it

cannot be proved, on the principles of juſt repreſentation, that either ſhould be wiſer or better than the other. They may check in the wrong as well as in the right,—and therefore, to give the power where we cannot give the wiſdom to uſe it, nor be aſſured of its being rightly uſed, renders the hazard at leaſt equal to the precaution *.

* With reſpect to the two houſes, of which the Engliſh Parliament is compoſed, they appear to be effectually influenced into one, and, as a legiſlature, to have no temper of its own. The miniſter, whoever he at any time may be, touches it as with an opium wand, and it ſleeps obedience.

But if we look at the diſtinct abilities of the two houſes, the difference will appear ſo great, as to ſhew the inconſiſtency of placing power where there can be no certainty of the judgment to uſe it. Wretched as the ſtate of repreſentation is in England, it is manhood compared with what is called the houſe of Lords; and ſo little is this nick-named houſe regarded, that the people ſcarcely inquire at any time what it is doing. It appears alſo to be moſt under influence, and the furtheſt removed from the general intereſt of the nation. In the debate on engaging in the Ruſſian and Turkiſh war, the majority in the houſe of peers in favour of it was upwards of ninety, when in the other houſe, which is more than double its numbers, the majority was ſixty-three.

The proceedings on Mr. Fox's bill, reſpecting the rights of juries, merits alſo to be noticed. The perſons called the peers were not the objects of that bill. They are already in poſſeſſion of more privileges than that bill gave to others. They are their own jury, and if any of that houſe were proſecuted for a libel, he would not ſuffer, even upon conviction, for the firſt offence. Such inequality in laws ought not to exiſt in any country. The French conſtitution ſays, That *the law is the ſame to every individual, whether to protect or to puniſh. All are equal in its ſight.*

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The objection againſt a ſingle houſe is, that it is always in a condition of committing itſelf too ſoon.—But it ſhould at the ſame time be remembered, that when there is a conſtitution which defines the power, and eſtabliſhes the principles within which a legiſlature ſhall act, there is already a more effectual check provided, and more powerfully operating, than any other check can be. For example,

Were a bill to be brought into any of the American legiſlatures, ſimilar to that which was paſſed into an act by the Engliſh parliament, at the commencement of George the Firſt, to extend the duration of the aſſemblies to a longer period than they now ſit, the check is in the conſtitution, which in effect ſays, *Thus far ſhalt thou go and no further.*

But in order to remove the objection againſt a ſingle houſe, (that of acting with too quick an impulſe,) and at the ſame time to avoid the inconſiſtencies, in ſome caſes abſurdities, ariſing from two houſes, the following method has been propoſed as an improvement upon both.

Firſt, To have but one repreſentation.

Secondly, To divide that repreſentation, by lot, into two or three parts.

Thirdly, That every propoſed bill, ſhall be firſt debated in thoſe parts by ſucceſſion, that they may become the hearers of each other, but without taking any vote. After which the whole repreſentation

ſentation to aſſemble for a general debate and determination by vote.

To this propoſed improvement has been added another, for the purpoſe of keeping the repreſentation in a ſtate of conſtant renovation; which is, that one-third of the repreſentation of each county, ſhall go out at the expiration of one year, and the number be replaced by new elections.—Another third at the expiration of the ſecond year replaced in like manner, and every third year to be a general election *.

But in whatever manner the ſeparate parts of a conſtitution may be arranged, there is *one* general principle that diſtinguiſhes freedom from ſlavery, which is, that all *hereditary government over a people is to them a ſpecies of ſlavery, and repreſentative government is freedom.*

Conſidering government in the only light in which it ſhould be conſidered, that of a NATIONAL ASSOCIATION; it ought to be ſo conſtructed as not to be diſordered by any accident happening among the parts; and, therefore, no extraordinary power, capable of producing ſuch an effect, ſhould be lodged in the hands of any individual. The death, ſickneſs, abſence, or defec-

* As to the ſtate of repreſentation in England, it is too abſurd to be reaſoned upon. Almoſt all the repreſented parts are decreaſing in population, and the unrepreſented parts are increaſing. A general convention of the nation is neceſſary to take the whole ſtate of its government into conſideration.

tion, of any one individual in a government, ought to be a matter of no more conſequence, with reſpect to the nation, than if the ſame circumſtance had taken place in a member of the Engliſh Parliament, or the French National Aſſembly.

Scarcely any thing preſents a more degrading character of national greatneſs, than its being thrown into confuſion by any thing happening to, or acted by, an individual; and the ridiculouſneſs of the ſcene is often increaſed by the natural inſignificance of the perſon by whom it is occaſioned. Were a government ſo conſtructed, that it could not go on unleſs a gooſe or a gander were preſent in the ſenate, the difficulties would be juſt as great and as real on the flight or ſickneſs of the gooſe, or the gander, as if it were called a King. We laugh at individuals for the ſilly difficulties they make to themſelves, without perceiving, that the greateſt of all ridiculous things are acted in governments *.

All

* It is related, that in the canton of Berne, in Swiſſerland, it had been cuſtomary, from time immemorial, to keep a bear at the public expence, and the people had been taught to believe, that if they had not a bear they ſhould all be undone. It happened ſome years ago, that the bear, then in being, was taken ſick and died too ſuddenly to have his place immediately ſupplied with another. During this interregnum the people diſcovered, that the corn grew, and the vintage flouriſhed, and the ſun and moon continued to riſe and ſet, and every thing went on the ſame as before, and, taking courage from theſe circumſtances,

All the conſtitutions of America are on a plan that excludes the childiſh embarraſſments which occur in monarchical countries. No ſuſpenſion of government can there take place for a moment, from any circumſtance whatever. The ſyſtem of repreſentation provides for every thing, and is the only ſyſtem in which nations and governments can always appear in their proper character.

As extraordinary power, ought not to be lodged in the hands of any individual, ſo ought there to be no appropriations of public money to any perſon, beyond what his ſervices in a ſtate may be worth. It ſignifies not whether a man be called a preſident, a king, an emperor, a ſenator, or by any other name, which propriety or folly may deviſe, or arrogance aſſume, it is only a certain ſervice he can perform in the ſtate; and the ſervice of any ſuch individual in the rotine of office, whether ſuch office be called monarchical, preſidential, ſenatorial, or by any other name or title, can never exceed the value of ten thouſand

cumſtances, they reſolved not to keep any more bears; for, ſaid they, "a bear is a very voracious, expenſive animal, and "we were obliged to pull out his claws, leſt he ſhould hurt the "citizens."

The ſtory of the bear of Berne was related in ſome of the French news-papers, at the time of the flight of Louis XVI. and the application of it to monarchy could not be miſtaken in France; but it ſeems, that the ariſtocracy of Berne applied it to themſelves, and have ſince prohibited the reading of French news-papers.

pounds a year. All the great ſervices that are done in the world are performed by volunteer characters, who accept nothing for them; but the rotine of office is always regulated to ſuch a general ſtandard of abilities as to be within the compaſs of numbers in every country to perform, and therefore cannot merit very extraordinary recompence. *Government*, ſays Swift, *is a plain thing, and fitted to the capacity of many heads.*

It is inhuman to talk of a million ſterling a year, paid out of the public taxes of any country, for the ſupport of any individual, whilſt thouſands who are forced to contribute thereto, are pining with want, and ſtruggling with miſery. Government does not conſiſt in a contraſt between priſons and palaces, between poverty and pomp; it is not inſtituted to rob the needy of his mite, and increaſe the wretchedneſs of the wretched.—But of this part of the ſubject I ſhall ſpeak hereafter, and confine myſelf at preſent to political obſervations.

When extraordinary power and extraordinary pay are allotted to any individual in a government, he becomes the center, round which every kind of corruption generates and forms. Give to any man a million a year, and add thereto the power of creating and diſpoſing of places, at the expence of a country, and the liberties of that country are no longer ſecure. What is called the ſplendor of a throne is no other than the corrup-

tion of the ſtate. It is made up of a band of paraſites, living in luxurious indolence, out of the public taxes.

When once ſuch a vicious ſyſtem is eſtabliſhed it becomes the guard and protection of all inferior abuſes. The man who is in the receipt of a million a year is the laſt perſon to promote a ſpirit of reform, leſt, in the event, it ſhould reach to himſelf. It is always his intereſt to defend inferior abuſes, as ſo many out-works to protect the citadel; and in this ſpecies of political fortification, all the parts have ſuch a common dependence that it is never to be expected they will attack each other*.

Monarchy

* It is ſcarcely poſſible to touch on any ſubject, that will not ſuggeſt an alluſion to ſome corruption in governments. The ſimile of "*fortifications*," unfortunately involves with it a circumſtance, which is directly in point with the matter above alluded to.

Among the numerous inſtances of abuſe which have been acted or protected by governments, ancient or modern, there is not a greater than that of quartering a man and his heirs upon the public, to be maintained at its expence.

Humanity dictates a proviſion for the poor; but by what right, moral or political, does any government aſſume to ſay, that the perſon called the Duke of Richmond, ſhall be maintained by the public? Yet, if common report is true, not a beggar in London can purchaſe his wretched pittance of coal, without paying towards the civil liſt of the Duke of Richmond. Were the whole produce of this impoſition but a ſhilling a year, the iniquitous principle would be ſtill the ſame; but when it amounts, as it is ſaid to do, to not leſs than twenty thouſand pounds *per ann.* the enormity is too ſerious to be permitted to remain—This is one of the effects of monarchy and ariſtocracy.

Monarchy would not have continued ſo many ages in the world, had it not been for the abuſes it protects. It is the maſter-fraud, which ſhelters all others. By admitting a participation of the ſpoil, it makes itſelf friends; and when it ceaſes to do this, it will ceaſe to be the idol of courtiers.

As the principle on which conſtitutions are now formed rejects all hereditary pretentions to government, it alſo rejects all that catalogue of aſſumptions known by the name of prerogatives.

If there is any government where prerogatives might with apparent ſafety be entruſted to any individual, it is in the fœderal government of America. The Preſident of the United States of America is elected only for four years. He is not only reſponſible in the general ſenſe of the word, but a particular mode is laid down in the conſtitution for trying him. He cannot be elected under thirty-five years of age; and he muſt be a native of the country.

In a compariſon of theſe caſes with the government of England, the difference when applied to the latter amounts to an abſurdity. In England the perſon who exerciſes prerogative is often a

In ſtating this caſe, I am led by no perſonal diſlike. Though I think it mean in any man to live upon the public, the vice originates in the government; and ſo general is it become, that whether the parties are in the miniſtry or in the oppoſition, it makes no difference: they are ſure of the guarantee of each other.

foreigner;

foreigner; always half a foreigner, and always married to a foreigner. He is never in full natural or political connection with the country, is not responsible for any thing, and becomes of age at eighteen years; yet such a person is permitted to form foreign alliances, without even the knowledge of the nation, and to make war and peace without its consent.

But this is not all. Though such a person cannot dispose of the government, in the manner of a testator, he dictates the marriage connections, which, in effect, accomplishes a great part of the same end. He cannot directly bequeath half the government to Prussia, but he can form a marriage partnership that will produce almost the same thing. Under such circumstances, it is happy for England that she is not situated on the continent, or she might, like Holland, fall under the dictatorship of Prussia. Holland, by marriage, is as effectually governed by Prussia, as if the old tyranny of bequeathing the government had been the means.

The presidency in America, (or, as it is sometimes called, the executive,) is the only office from which a foreigner is excluded, and in England it is the only one to which he is admitted. A foreigner cannot be a member of parliament, but he may be what is called a king. If there is any reason for excluding foreigners, it ought to be from those offices where mischief can most be acted, and where, by uniting every

bias of intereſt and attachment, the truſt is beſt ſecured.

But as nations proceed in the great buſineſs of forming conſtitutions, they will examine with more preciſion into the nature and buſineſs of that department which is called the executive. What the legiſlative and judicial departments are, every one can ſee; but with reſpect to what, in Europe, is called the executive, as diſtinct from thoſe two, it is either a political ſuperfluity or a chaos of unknown things.

Some kind of official department, to which reports ſhall be made from the different parts of a nation, or from abroad, to be laid before the national repreſentatives, is all that is neceſſary; but there is no conſiſtency in calling this the executive; neither can it be conſidered in any other light than as inferior to the legiſlative. The ſovereign authority in any country is the power of making laws, and every thing elſe is an official department.

Next to the arrangement of the principles and the organization of the ſeveral parts of a conſtitution, is the proviſion to be made for the ſupport of the perſons to whom the nation ſhall confide the adminiſtration of the conſtitutional powers.

A nation can have no right to the time and ſervices of any perſon at his own expence, whom it may chuſe to employ or entruſt in any department whatever; neither can any reaſon be given for

for making provifion for the fupport of any one part of a government and not for the other.

But, admitting that the honour of being entrufted with any part of a government is to be conſidered a ſufficient reward, it ought to be ſo to every perſon alike. If the members of the legiſlature of any country are to ſerve at their own expence, that which is called the executive, whether monarchical, or by any other name, ought to ſerve in like manner. It is inconſiſtent to pay the one, and accept the ſervice of the other gratis.

In America, every department in the government is decently provided for; but no one is extravagantly paid. Every member of Congreſs, and of the aſſemblies, is allowed a ſufficiency for his expences. Whereas in England, a moſt prodigal proviſion is made for the ſupport of one part of the government, and none for the other, the conſequence of which is, that the one is furniſhed with the means of corruption, and the other is put into the condition of being corrupted. Leſs than a fourth part of ſuch expence, applied as it is in America, would remedy a great part of the corruption.

Another reform in the American conſtitutions, is the exploding all oaths of perſonality. The oath of allegiance in America is to the nation only. The putting any individual as a figure for a nation is improper. The happineſs of a nation is the ſuperior object, and therefore the intention

of

of an oath of allegiance ought not to be obſcured by being figuratively taken, to, or in the name of, any perſon. The oath, called the civic oath, in France, viz. the "*nation, the law, and the king,*" is improper. If taken at all, it ought to be as in America, to the nation only. The law may or may not be good; but, in this place, it can have no other meaning, than as being conducive to the happineſs of the nation, and therefore is included in it. The remainder of the oath is improper, on the ground, that all perſonal oaths ought to be aboliſhed. They are the remains of tyranny on one part, and ſlavery on the other; and the name of the CREATOR ought not to be introduced to witneſs the degradation of his creation; or if taken, as is already mentioned, as figurative of the nation, it is in this place redundant. But whatever apology may be made for oaths at the firſt eſtabliſhment of a government, they ought not to be permitted afterwards. If a government requires the ſupport of oaths, it is a ſign that it is not worth ſupporting, and ought not to be ſupported. Make government what it ought to be, and it will ſupport itſelf.

To conclude this part of the ſubject:—One of the greateſt improvements that has been made for the perpetual ſecurity and progreſs of conſtitutional liberty, is the proviſion which the new conſtitutions make for occaſionally reviſing, altering, and amending them.

The principle upon which Mr. Burke formed his

his political creed, that "*of binding and controul-*
"*ing posterity to the end of time, and of renouncing*
"*and abdicating the rights of all posterity for*
"*ever,*" is now become too detestable to be made a subject of debate; and, therefore, I pass it over with no other notice than exposing it.

Government is but now beginning to be known. Hitherto it has been the mere exercise of power, which forbad all effectual enquiry into rights, and grounded itself wholly on possession. While the enemy of liberty was its judge, the progress of its principles must have been small indeed.

The constitutions of America, and also that of France, have either affixed a period for their revision, or laid down the mode by which improvements shall be made. It is perhaps impossible to establish any thing that combines principles with opinions and practice, which the progress of circumstances, through a length of years, will not in some measure derange, or render inconsistent; and, therefore, to prevent inconveniences accumulating, till they discourage reformations or provoke revolutions, it is best to provide the means of regulating them as they occur. The Rights of Man are the rights of all generations of men, and cannot be monopolized by any. That which is worth following, will be followed for the sake of its worth; and it is in this that its security lies, and not in any conditions with which it may be encumbered. When a man

leaves

leaves property to his heirs, he does not connect it with an obligation that they ſhall accept it. Why then ſhould we do otherwiſe with reſpect to conſtitutions?

The beſt conſtitution that could now be deviſed, conſiſtent with the condition of the preſent moment, may be far ſhort of that excellence which a few years may afford. There is a morning of reaſon riſing upon man on the ſubject of government, that has not appeared before. As the barbariſm of the preſent old governments expires, the moral condition of nations with reſpect to each other will be changed. Man will not be brought up with the ſavage idea of conſidering his ſpecies as his enemy, becauſe the accident of birth gave the individuals exiſtence in countries diſtinguiſhed by different names; and as conſtitutions have always ſome relation to external as well as to domeſtic circumſtances, the means of benefiting by every change, foreign or domeſtic, ſhould be a part of every conſtitution.

We already ſee an alteration in the national diſpoſition of England and France towards each other, which, when we look back to only a few years, is itſelf a revolution. Who could have foreſeen, or who would have believed, that a French National Aſſembly would ever have been a popular toaſt in England, or that a friendly alliance of the two nations ſhould become the wiſh of either. It ſhews, that man, were he not

corrupted

corrupted by governments, is naturally the friend of man, and that human nature is not of itſelf vicious. That ſpirit of jealouſy and ferocity, which the governments of the two countries inſpired, and which they rendered ſubſervient to the purpoſe of taxation, is now yielding to the dictates of reaſon, intereſt, and humanity. The trade of courts is beginning to be underſtood, and the affectation of myſtery, with all the artificial ſorcery by which they impoſed upon mankind, is on the decline. It has received its death-wound; and though it may linger, it will expire.

Government ought to be as much open to improvement as any thing which appertains to man, inſtead of which it has been monopolized from age to age, by the moſt ignorant and vicious of the human race. Need we any other proof of their wretched management, than the exceſs of debts and taxes with which every nation groans, and the quarrels into which they have precipitated the world?

Juſt emerging from ſuch a barbarous condition, it is too ſoon to determine to what extent of improvement government may yet be carried. For what we can foreſee, all Europe may form but one great republic, and man be free of the whole.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

WAYS AND MEANS of improving the condition of EUROPE, interſperſed with MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

IN contemplating a ſubject that embraces with equatorial magnitude the whole region of humanity, it is impoſſible to confine the purſuit in one ſingle direction. It takes ground on every character and condition that appertains to man, and blends the individual, the nation, and the world.

From a ſmall ſpark, kindled in America, a flame has ariſen, not to be extinguiſhed. Without conſuming, like the *Ultima Ratio Regum*, it winds its progreſs from nation to nation, and conquers by a ſilent operation. Man finds himſelf changed, he ſcarcely perceives how. He acquires a knowledge of his rights by attending juſtly to his intereſt, and diſcovers in the event that the ſtrength and powers of deſpotiſm conſiſt wholly in the fear of reſiſting it, and that, in order "*to be* "*free, it is ſufficient that he wills it.*"

Having in all the preceding parts of this work endeavoured to eſtabliſh a ſyſtem of principles as a baſis, on which governments ought to be erected; I ſhall proceed in this, to the ways and means of rendering them into practice. But in order to introduce this part of the ſubject with

more propriety, and ſtronger effect, ſome preliminary obſervations, deducible from, or connected with, thoſe principles, are neceſſary.

Whatever the form or conſtitution of government may be, it ought to have no other object than the *general* happineſs. When, inſtead of this, it operates to create and encreaſe wretchedneſs in any of the parts of ſociety, it is on a wrong ſyſtem, and reformation is neceſſary.

Cuſtomary language has claſſed the condition of man under the two deſcriptions of civilized and uncivilized life. To the one it has aſcribed felicity and affluence; to the other hardſhip and want. But, however, our imagination may be impreſſed by painting and compariſon, it is nevertheleſs true, that a great portion of mankind, in what are called civilized countries, are in a ſtate of poverty and wretchedneſs, far below the condition of an Indian. I ſpeak not of one country, but of all. It is ſo in England, it is ſo all over Europe. Let us enquire into the cauſe.

It lies not in any natural defect in the principles of civilization, but in preventing thoſe principles having an univerſal operation; the conſequence of which is, a perpetual ſyſtem of war and expence, that drains the country, and defeats the general felicity of which civilization is capable.

All the European governments (France now excepted) are conſtructed not on the principle of univerſal civilization, but on the reverſe of it. So far as thoſe governments relate to each other,

they

they are in the ſame condition as we conceive of ſavage uncivilized life; they put themſelves beyond the law as well of GOD as of man, and are, with reſpect to principle and reciprocal conduct, like ſo many individuals in a ſtate of nature.

The inhabitants of every country, under the civilization of laws, eaſily civilize together, but governments being yet in an uncivilized ſtate, and almoſt continually at war, they pervert the abundance which civilized life produces to carry on the uncivilized part to a greater extent. By thus engrafting the barbariſm of government upon the internal civilization of a country, it draws from the latter, and more eſpecially from the poor, a great portion of thoſe earnings, which ſhould be applied to their own ſubſiſtence and comfort.—Apart from all reflections of morality and philoſophy, it is a melancholy fact, that more than one-fourth of the labour of mankind is annually conſumed by this barbarous ſyſtem.

What has ſerved to continue this evil, is the pecuniary advantage, which all the governments of Europe have found in keeping up this ſtate of uncivilization. It affords to them pretences for power, and revenue, for which there would be neither occaſion nor apology, if the circle of civilization were rendered compleat. Civil government alone, or the government of laws, is not productive of pretences for many taxes; it operates at home, directly under the eye of the country, and precludes the poſſibility of much impoſition. But when the ſcene is laid in the uncivilized

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ed contention of governments, the field of pretences is enlarged, and the country, being no longer a judge, is open to every impoſition, which governments pleaſe to act.

Not a thirtieth, ſcarely a fortieth, part of the taxes which are raiſed in England are either occaſioned by, or applied to, the purpoſes of civil government. It is not difficult to ſee, that the whole which the actual government does in this reſpect, is to enact laws, and that the country adminiſters and executes them, at its own expence, by means of magiſtrates, juries, ſeſſions, and aſſize, over and above the taxes which it pays.

In this view of the caſe, we have two diſtinct characters of government; the one the civil government, or the government of laws, which operates at home, the other the court or cabinet government, which operates abroad, on the rude plan of uncivilized life; the one attended with little charge, the other with boundleſs extravagance; and ſo diſtinct are the two, that if the latter were to ſink, as it were by a ſudden opening of the earth, and totally diſappear, the former would not be deranged. It would ſtill proceed, becauſe it is the common intereſt of the nation that it ſhould, and all the means are in practice.

Revolutions, then, have for their object, a change in the moral condition of governments, and with this change the burthen of public taxes will leſſen, and civilization will be left to the enjoyment of that abundance, of which it is now deprived.

In contemplating the whole of this ſubject, I extend my views into the department of commerce. In all my publications, where the matter would admit, I have been an advocate for commerce, becauſe I am a friend to its effects. It is a pacific ſyſtem, operating to cordialize mankind, by rendering nations, as well as individuals, uſeful to each other. As to mere theoretical reformation, I have never preached it up. The moſt effectual proceſs is that of improving the condition of man by means of his intereſt; and it is on this ground that I take my ſtand.

If commerce were permitted to act to the univerſal extent it is capable, it would extirpate the ſyſtem of war, and produce a revolution in the uncivilized ſtate of governments. The invention of commerce has ariſen ſince thoſe governments began, and is the greateſt approach towards univerſal civilization, that has yet been made by any means not immediately flowing from moral principles.

Whatever has a tendency to promote the civil intercourſe of nations, by an exchange of benefits, is a ſubject as worthy of philoſophy as of politics. Commerce is no other than the traffic of two individuals, multiplied on a ſcale of numbers; and by the ſame rule that nature intended the intercourſe of two, ſhe intended that of all. For this purpoſe ſhe has diſtributed the materials of manufactures and commerce, in various and diſtant parts of a nation and of the world; and as they cannot be procured by war ſo cheaply or ſo commodiouſly

modiouſly as by commerce, ſhe has rendered the latter the means of extirpating the former.

As the two are nearly the oppoſites of each other, conſequently, the uncivilized ſtate of European governments is injurious to commerce. Every kind of deſtruction or embarraſſment ſerves to leſſen the quantity, and it matters but little in what part of the commercial world the reduction begins. Like blood, it cannot be taken from any of the parts, without being taken from the whole maſs in circulation, and all partake of the loſs. When the ability in any nation to buy is deſtroyed, it equally involves the ſeller. Could the government of England deſtroy the commerce of all other nations, ſhe would moſt effectually ruin her own.

It is poſſible that a nation may be the carrier for the world, but ſhe cannot be the merchant. She cannot be the ſeller and the buyer of her own merchandize. The ability to buy muſt reſide out of herſelf; and, therefore, the proſperity of any commercial nation is regulated by the proſperity of the reſt. If they are poor ſhe cannot be rich, and her condition, be it what it may, is an index of the height of the commercial tide in other nations.

That the principles of commerce, and its univerſal operation may be underſtood, without underſtanding the practice, is a poſition that reaſon will not deny; and it is on this ground only that I argue the ſubject. It is one thing in the

counting-houſe, in the world it is another. With reſpect to its operation it muſt neceſſarily be contemplated as a reciprocal thing; that only one half its powers reſides within the nation, and that the whole is as effectually deſtroyed by deſtroying the half that reſides without, as if the deſtruction had been committed on that which is within; for neither can act without the other.

When in the laſt, as well as in former wars, the commerce of England ſunk, it was becauſe the general quantity was leſſened every where; and it now riſes, becauſe commerce is in a riſing ſtate in every nation. If England, at this day, imports and exports more than at any former period, the nations with which ſhe trades muſt neceſſarily do the ſame; her imports are their exports, and *vice verſa*.

There can be no ſuch thing as a nation flouriſhing alone in commerce; ſhe can only participate; and the deſtruction of it in any part muſt neceſſarily affect all. When, therefore, governments are at war, the attack is made upon the common ſtock of commerce, and the conſequence is the ſame as if each had attacked his own.

The preſent increaſe of commerce is not to be attributed to miniſters, or to any political contrivances, but to its own natural operations in conſequence of peace. The regular markets had been deſtroyed, the channels of trade broken up, the high road of the ſeas infeſted with robbers of every nation, and the attention of the world called to other objects. Thoſe interruptions have ceaſed,

and peace has reſtored the deranged condition of things to their proper order *.

It is worth remarking, that every nation reckons the balance of trade in its own favour; and therefore ſomething muſt be irregular in the common ideas upon this ſubject.

The fact, however, is true, according to what is called a balance; and it is from this cauſe that commerce is univerſally ſupported. Every nation feels the advantage, or it would abandon the practice: but the deception lies in the mode of making up the accounts, and in attributing what are called profits to a wrong cauſe.

Mr. Pitt has ſometimes amuſed himſelf, by ſhewing what he called a balance of trade from the cuſtom-houſe books. This mode of calculation, not only affords no rule that is true, but one that is falſe.

In the firſt place, Every cargo that departs from the cuſtom-houſe, appears on the books as an export; and, according to the cuſtom-houſe balance, the loſſes at ſea, and by foreign failures,

* In America, the increaſe of commerce is greater in proportion than in England. It is, at this time, at leaſt one half more than at any period prior to the revolution. The greateſt number of veſſels cleared out of the port of Philadelphia, before the commencement of the war, was between eight and nine hundred. In the year 1788, the number was upwards of twelve hundred. As the ſtate of Pennſylvania is eſtimated as an eighth part of the United States in population, the whole number of veſſels muſt now be nearly ten thouſand.

are all reckoned on the ſide of profit, becauſe they appear as exports.

Secondly, Becauſe the importation by the ſmuggling trade does not appear on the cuſtom-houſe books, to arrange againſt the exports.

No balance, therefore, as applying to ſuperior advantages, can be drawn from thoſe documents; and if we examine the natural operation of commerce, the idea is fallacious; and if true, would ſoon be injurious. The great ſupport of commerce conſiſts in the balance being a level of beneſits among all nations.

Two merchants of different nations trading together, will both become rich, and each makes the balance in his own favour; conſequently, they do not get rich out of each other; and it is the ſame with reſpect to the nations in which they reſide. The caſe muſt be, that each nation muſt get rich out of its own means, and increaſes that riches by ſomething which it procures from another in exchange.

If a merchant in England ſends an article of Engliſh manufacture abroad, which coſts him a ſhilling at home, and imports ſomething which ſells for two, he makes a balance of one ſhilling in his own favour: but this is not gained out of the foreign nation or the foreign merchant, for he alſo does the ſame by the article he receives, and neither has a balance of advantage upon the other. The original value of the two articles in their proper countries were but two ſhillings; but by changing

changing their places, they acquire a new idea of value, equal to double what they had at firſt, and that increaſed value is equally divided.

There is no otherwiſe a balance on foreign than on domeſtic commerce. The merchants of London and Newcaſtle trade on the ſame principles, as if they reſided in different nations, and make their balances in the ſame manner: yet London does not get rich out of Newcaſtle, any more than Newcaſtle out of London: but coals, the merchandize of Newcaſtle, have an additional value at London, and London merchandize has the ſame at Newcaſtle.

Though the principle of all commerce is the ſame, the domeſtic, in a national view, is the part the moſt beneficial; becauſe the whole of the advantages, on both ſides, reſts within the nation; whereas, in foreign commerce, it is only a participation of one half.

The moſt unprofitable of all commerce is that connected with foreign dominion. To a few individuals it may be beneficial, merely becauſe it is commerce; but to the nation it is a loſs. The expence of maintaining dominion more than abſorbs the profits of any trade. It does not increaſe the general quantity in the world, but operates to leſſen it; and as a greater maſs would be afloat by relinquiſhing dominion, the participation without the expence would be more valuable than a greater quantity with it.

But it is impoſſible to engroſs commerce by

dominion; and therefore it is ſtill more fallacious. It cannot exiſt in confined channels, and neceſſarily breaks out by regular or irregular means, that defeat the attempt; and to ſucceed would be ſtill worſe. France, ſince the revolution, has been more than indifferent as to foreign poſſeſſions; and other nations will become the ſame, when they inveſtigate the ſubject with reſpect to commerce.

To the expence of dominion is to be added that of navies, and when the amount of the two are ſubtracted from the profits of commerce, it will appear, that what is called the balance of trade, even admitting it to exiſt, is not enjoyed by the nation, but abſorbed by the government.

The idea of having navies for the protection of commerce is deluſive. It is putting the means of deſtruction for the means of protection. Commerce needs no other protection than the reciprocal intereſt which every nation feels in ſupporting it—it is common ſtock—it exiſts by a balance of advantages to all; and the only interruption it meets, is from the preſent uncivilized ſtate of governments, and which it is its common intereſt to reform *.

* When I ſaw Mr. Pitt's mode of eſtimating the balance of trade, in one of his parliamentary ſpeeches, he appeared to me to know nothing of the nature and intereſt of commerce; and no man has more wantonly tortured it than himſelf. During a period of peace, it has been havocked with the calamities of war. Three times has it been thrown into ſtagnation, and the veſſels unmaned by impreſſing, within leſs than four years of peace.

Quitting

Quitting this ſubject, I now proceed to other matters.—As it is neceſſary to include England in the proſpect of a general reformation, it is proper to enquire into the defects of its government. It is only by each nation reforming its own, that the whole can be improved, and the full benefit of reformation enjoyed. Only partial advantages can flow from partial reforms.

France and England are the only two countries in Europe where a reformation in government could have ſucceſsfully begun. The one ſecure by the ocean, and the other by the immenſity of its internal ſtrength, could defy the malignancy of foreign deſpotiſm. But it is with revolutions as with commerce, the advantages increaſe by their becoming general, and double to either what each would receive alone.

As a new ſyſtem is now opening to the view of the world, the European courts are plotting to counteract it. Alliances, contrary to all former ſyſtems, are agitating, and a common intereſt of courts is forming againſt the common intereſt of man. This combination draws a line that runs throughout Europe, and preſents a cauſe ſo entirely new, as to exclude all calculations from former circumſtances. While deſpotiſm warred with deſpotiſm, man had no intereſt in the conteſt; but in a cauſe that unites the ſoldier with the citizen, and nation with nation, the deſpotiſm of courts, though it feels the danger, and meditates revenge, is afraid to ſtrike.

No

No queſtion has ariſen within the records of hiſtory that preſſed with the importance of the preſent. It is not whether this or that party ſhall be in or out, or whig or tory, or high or low ſhall prevail; but whether man ſhall inherit his rights, and univerſal civilization take place? Whether the fruits of his labours ſhall be enjoyed by himſelf, or conſumed by the profligacy of governments? Whether robbery ſhall be baniſhed from courts, and wretchedneſs from countries?

When, in countries that are called civilized, we ſee age going to the workhouſe and youth to the gallows, ſomething muſt be wrong in the ſyſtem of government. It would ſeem, by the exterior appearance of ſuch countries, that all was happineſs; but there lies hidden from the eye of common obſervation, a maſs of wretchedneſs that has ſcarcely any other chance, than to expire in poverty or infamy. Its entrance into life is marked with the preſage of its fate; and until this is remedied, it is in vain to puniſh.

Civil government does not conſiſt in executions; but in making that proviſion for the inſtruction of youth, and the ſupport of age, as to exclude, as much as poſſible, profligacy from the one, and deſpair from the other. Inſtead of this, the reſources of a country are laviſhed upon kings, upon courts, upon hirelings, impoſters, and proſtitutes; and even the poor themſelves, with all their wants upon them, are compelled to ſupport the fraud that oppreſſes them.

Why

Why is it, that ſcarcely any are executed but the poor? The fact is a proof, among other things, of a wretchedneſs in their condition. Bred up without morals, and caſt upon the world without a proſpect, they are the expoſed ſacrifice of vice and legal barbarity. The millions that are ſuperfluouſly waſted upon governments, are more than ſufficient to reform thoſe evils, and to benefit the condition of every man in a nation, not included within the purlieus of a court. This I hope to make appear in the progreſs of this work.

It is the nature of compaſſion to aſſociate with misfortune. In taking up this ſubject I ſeek no recompence—I fear no conſequence. Fortified with that proud integrity, that diſdains to triumph or to yield, I will advocate the Rights of Man.

It is to my advantage that I have ſerved an apprenticeſh*ip* to life. I know the value of moral inſtruction, and I have ſeen the danger of the contrary.

At an early period, little more than ſixteen years of age, raw and adventurous, and heated with the falſe heroiſm of a maſter * who had ſerved in a man of war, I began the carver of my own fortune, and entered on board the Terrible, Privateer, Capt. Death. From this adventure I

* Rev. William Knowles, maſter of the grammar ſchool of Thetford, in Norfolk.

was happily prevented by the affectionate and moral remonſtrance of a good father, who, from his own habits of life, being of the Quaker profeſſion, muſt begin to look upon me as loſt. But the impreſſion, much as it effected at the time, began to wear away, and I entered afterwards in the King of Pruſſia Privateer, Capt. Mendez, and went with her to ſea. Yet, from ſuch a beginning, and with all the inconvenience of early life againſt me, I am proud to ſay, that with a perſeverance undiſmayed by difficulties, a diſintereſtedneſs that compelled reſpect, I have not only contributed to raiſe a new empire in the world, founded on a new ſyſtem of government, but I have arrived at an eminence in political literature, the moſt difficult of all lines to ſucceed and excel in, which ariſtocracy, with all its aids, has not been able to reach or to rival.

Knowing my own heart, and feeling myſelf, as I now do, ſuperior to all the ſkirmiſh of party, the inveteracy of intereſted or miſtaken opponents, I anſwer not to falſehood or abuſe, but proceed to the defects of the Engliſh government*.

I begin with charters and corporations.

It

* Politics and ſelf-intereſt have been ſo uniformly connected, that the world, from being ſo often deceived, has a right to be ſuſpicious of public characters: but with regard to myſelf, I am perfectly eaſy on this head. I did not, at my firſt ſetting out in public life, nearly ſeventeen years ago, turn my thoughts to ſubjects

of

It is a perverſion of terms to ſay, that a charter gives rights. It operates by a contrary effect, that of taking rights away. Rights are inherently in of government from motives of intereſt; and my conduct from that moment to this, proves the fact. I ſaw an opportunity, in which I thought I could do ſome good, and I followed exactly what my heart dictated. I neither read books, nor ſtudied other people's opinions. I thought for myſelf. The caſe was this:

During the ſuſpenſion of the old governments in America, both prior to, and at the breaking out of hoſtilities, I was ſtruck with the order and decorum with which every thing was conducted; and impreſſed with the idea, that a little more than what ſociety naturally performed, was all the government that was neceſſary; and that monarchy and ariſtocracy were frauds and impoſitions upon mankind. On theſe principles I publiſhed the pamphlet *Common Senſe*. The ſucceſs it met with was beyond any thing ſince the invention of printing. I gave the copy right up to every ſtate in the union, and the demand ran to not leſs than one hundred thouſand copies. I continued the ſubject in the ſame manner, under the title of the *Criſis*, till the complete eſtabliſhment of the revolution.

After the declaration of independence, Congreſs unanimouſly, and unknown to me, appointed me ſecretary in the foreign department. This was agreeable to me, becauſe it gave me the opportunity of ſeeing into the abilities of foreign courts, and their manner of doing buſineſs. But a miſunderſtanding ariſing between congreſs and me, reſpecting one of their commiſſioners, then in Europe, Mr. Silas Deane, I reſigned the office, and declined, at the ſame time, the pecuniary offers made me by the miniſters of France and Spain. M. Gerard and Don Juan Mirralles.

I had by this time ſo completely gained the ear and confidence of America, and my own independence was become ſo viſible as to give me a range in political writing, beyond, perhaps, what any man ever poſſeſſed in any country; and what is

in all the inhabitants; but charters, by annulling thoſe rights in the majority, leave the right by excluſion

is more extraordinary, I held it undiminiſhed to the end of the war, and enjoy it in the ſame manner to the preſent moment. As my object was not myſelf, I ſet out with the determination, and happily with the diſpoſition, of not being moved by praiſe or cenſure, friendſhip or calumny, nor of being drawn from my purpoſe by any perſonal altercation; and the man who cannot do this, is not fit for a public character.

When the war ended, I went from Philadelphia to Borden-Town, on the eaſt bank of the Delaware, where I have a ſmall place. Congreſs was at this time at Prince-Town, fifteen miles diſtant; and General Waſhington had taken his head-quarters at Rocky-Hill, within the neighbourhood of Congreſs, for the purpoſe of reſigning up his commiſſion, (the object for which he accepted it being accompliſhed,) and of retiring to private life. While he was on this buſineſs, he wrote me the letter which I here ſubjoin.

Rocky-Hill, Sept. 10, 1783.

I have learned ſince I have been at this place, that you are at Borden-Town. Whether for the ſake of retirement or œconomy, I know not. Be it for either, for both, or whatever it may, if you will come to this place, and partake with me, I ſhall be exceedingly happy to ſee you at it.

Your preſence may remind Congreſs of your paſt ſervices to this country; and if it is in my power to impreſs them, command my beſt exertions with freedom, as they will be rendered cheartully by one, who entertains a lively ſenſe of the importance of your works, and who, with much pleaſure, ſubſcribes himſelf,

Your ſincere friend,

G. WASHINGTON.

During the war, in the latter end of the year 1780, I formed to myſelf a deſign of coming over to England; and communicated it to General Greene, who was then in Philadelphia, on his route to the ſouthward, General Waſhington being then at

too

exclusion in the hands of a few. If charters were constructed so as to express in direct terms, "*that*

too great a distance to communicate with immediately. I was strongly impressed with the idea, that if I could get over to England, without being known, and only remain in safety till I could get out a publication, that I could open the eyes of the country with respect to the madness and stupidity of its government. I saw that the parties in parliament had pitted themselves as far as they could go, and could make no new impressions on each other. General Greene entered fully into my views; but the affair of Arnold and Andrè happening just after, he changed his mind, and, under strong apprehensions for my safety, wrote very pressingly to me from Anapolis, in Maryland, to give up the design, which, with some reluctance, I did. Soon after this I accompanied Col. Lawrens, son of Mr. Lawrens, who was then in the Tower, to France, on business from Congress. We landed at L'Orient; and while I remained there, he being gone forward, a circumstance occurred, that renewed my former design. An English packet from Falmouth to New-York, with the government dispatches on board, was brought into L'Orient. That a packet should be taken, is no extraordinary thing; but that the dispatches should be taken with it, will scarcely be credited, as they are always slung at the cabin window, in a bag loaded with cannon-ball, and ready to be sunk at a moment. The fact, however, is as I have stated it, for the dispatches came into my hands, and I read them. The capture, as I was informed, succeeded by the following stratagem:—The captain of the Madame privateer, who spoke English, on coming up with the packet, passed himself for the captain of an English frigate, and invited the captain of the paeket on board, which, when done, he sent some of his own hands back, and secured the mail. But be the circumstance of the capture what it may, I speak with certainty as to the government dispatches. They were sent up to Paris, to Count Vergennes, and when Col. Lawrens and myself returned to America, we took the originals to Congress.

By

"*that every inhabitant, who is not a member of a* "*corporation, ſhall not exerciſe the right of voting,*" ſuch charters would, in the face, be charters, not of rights, but of excluſion. The effect is the ſame under the form they now ſtand; and the only perſons on whom they operate, are the perſons whom they exclude. Thoſe whoſe rights are guaranteed, by not being taken away, exerciſe no other rights, than as members of the community they are entitled to without a charter; and, therefore, all charters have no other than an indirect negative operation. They do not give rights to A, but they make a difference in favour of A by taking away the right of B, and conſequently are inſtruments of injuſtice.

But charters and corporations have a more extenſive evil effect, than what relates merely to elections. They are ſources of endleſs contentions in the places where they exiſt; and they leſſen the common rights of national ſociety. A native of England, under the operation of theſe charters and corporations, cannot be ſaid to be an Engliſhman in the full ſenſe of the word. He is not free of the nation, in the ſame manner

By theſe diſpatches I ſaw into the ſtupidity of the Engliſh cabinet, far more than I otherwiſe could have done, and I renewed my former deſign. But Col. Lawrens was ſo unwilling to return alone; more eſpecially, as among other matters, we had a charge of upwards of two hundred thouſand pounds ſterling in money, that I gave into his wiſhes, and finally gave up my plan. But I am now certain, that if I could have executed it, that it would not have been altogether unſucceſsful.

that

that a Frenchman is free of France, and an American of America. His rights are circumſcribed to the town, and, in ſome caſes, to the pariſh of his birth; and all other parts, though in his native land, are to him as a foreign country. To acquire a reſidence in theſe, he muſt undergo a local naturalization by purchaſe, or he is forbidden or expelled the place. This ſpecies of feudality is kept up to aggrandize the corporations at the ruin of towns; and the effect is viſible.

The generality of corporation towns are in a ſtate of ſolitary decay, and prevented from further ruin, only by ſome circumſtance in their ſituation, ſuch as a navigable river, or a plentiful ſurrounding country. As population is one of the chief ſources of wealth, (for without it land itſelf has no value,) every thing which operates to prevent it muſt leſſen the value of property; and as corporations have not only this tendency, but directly this effect, they cannot but be injurious. If any policy were to be followed, inſtead of that of general freedom, to every perſon to ſettle where he choſe, (as in France or America,) it would be more conſiſtent to give encouragement to new comers, than to preclude their admiſſion by exacting premiums from them *.

The

* It is difficult to account for the origin of charter and corporation towns, unleſs we ſuppoſe them to have ariſen out of, or been connected with, ſome ſpecies of garriſon ſervice. The

The perſons moſt immediately intereſted in the abolition of corporations, are the inhabitants of the towns where corporations are eſtabliſhed. The inſtances of Mancheſter, Birmingham, and Sheffield, ſhew, by contraſt, the injury which thoſe Gothic inſtitutions are to property and commerce. A few examples may be found, ſuch as that of London, whoſe natural and commercial advantage, owing to its ſituation on the Thames, is capable of bearing up againſt the political evils of a corporation; but in almoſt all other caſes the fatality is too viſible to be doubted or denied.

Though the whole nation is not ſo directly affected by the depreſſion of property in corporation towns as the inhabitants themſelves, it partakes of the conſequence. By leſſening the value of property, the quantity of national commerce is curtailed. Every man is a cuſtomer in proportion to his ability; and as all parts of a nation trade with each other, whatever affects any of

times in which they began juſtify this idea. The generality of thoſe towns have been garriſons; and the corporations were charged with the care of the gates of the towns, when no military garriſon was preſent. Their refuſing or granting admiſſion to ſtrangers, which has produced the cuſtom of giving, ſelling, and buying freedom, has more of the nature of garriſon authority than civil government. Soldiers are free of all corporations throughout the nation, by the ſame propriety that every ſoldier is free of every garriſon, and no other perſons are. He can follow any employment, with the permiſſion of his officers, in any corporation town throughout the nation.

the parts, muſt neceſſarily communicate to the whole.

As one of the houſes of the Engliſh parliament is, in a great meaſure, made up of elections from theſe corporations; and as it is unnatural that a pure ſtream ſhould flow from a foul fountain, its vices are but a continuation of the vices of its origin. A man of moral honour and good political principles, cannot ſubmit to the mean drudgery and diſgraceful arts, by which ſuch elections are carried. To be a ſucceſsful candidate, he muſt be deſtitute of the qualities that conſtitute a juſt legiſlator: and being thus diſciplined to corruption by the mode of entering into parliament, it is not to be expected that the repreſentative ſhould be better than the man.

Mr. Burke, in ſpeaking of the Engliſh repreſentation, has advanced as bold a challenge as ever was given in the days of chivalry. "Our "repreſentation," ſays he, "has been found "*perfectly adequate to all the purpoſes* for which a "repreſentation of the people can be deſired or "deviſed. I defy," continues he, "the enemies "of our conſtitution to ſhew the contrary."—— This declaration from a man, who has been in conſtant oppoſition to all the meaſures of parliament the whole of his political life, a year or two excepted, is moſt extraordinary; and, comparing him with himſelf, admits of no other alternative, than that he acted againſt his judgment as a member, or has declared contrary to it as an author.

But it is not in the repreſentation only that the defects lie, and therefore I proceed in the next place to the ariſtocracy.

What is called the Houſe of Peers, is conſtituted on a ground very ſimilar to that, againſt which there is a law in other caſes. It amounts to a combination of perſons in one common intereſt. No reaſon can be given, why an houſe of legiſlation ſhould be compoſed entirely of men whoſe occupation conſiſts in letting landed property, than why it ſhould be compoſed of thoſe who hire, or of brewers, or bakers, or any other ſeparate claſs of men.

Mr. Burke calls this houſe, "*the great ground* "*and pillar of ſecurity to the landed intereſt.*" Let us examine this idea.

What pillar of ſecurity does the landed intereſt require more than any other intereſt in the ſtate, or what right has it to a diſtinct and ſeparate repreſentation from the general intereſt of a nation? The only uſe to be made of this power, (and which it has always made,) is to ward off taxes from itſelf, and throw the burthen upon ſuch articles of conſumption by which itſelf would be leaſt affected.

That this has been the conſequence, (and will always be the conſequence of conſtructing governments on combinations,) is evident with reſpect to England, from the hiſtory of its taxes.

Notwithſtanding taxes have encreaſed and multiplied upon every article of common conſumption,

tion, the land-tax, which more particularly affects this "pillar," has diminiſhed. In 1788, the amount of the land-tax was 1,950,000£. which is half a million leſs than it produced almoſt an hundred years ago *, notwithſtanding the rentals are in many inſtances doubled ſince that period.

Before the coming of the Hanoverians, the taxes were divided in nearly equal proportions between the land and articles of conſumption, the land bearing rather the largeſt ſhare: but ſince that æra, nearly thirteen millions annually of new taxes have been thrown upon conſumption. The conſequence of which has been a conſtant encreaſe in the number and wretchedneſs of the poor, and in the amount of the poor-rates. Yet here again the burthen does not fall in equal proportions on the ariſtocracy with the reſt of the community. Their reſidences, whether in town or country, are not mixed with the habitations of the poor. They live apart from diſtreſs, and the expence of relieving it. It is in manufacturing towns and labouring villages that thoſe burthens preſs the heavieſt; in many of which it is one claſs of poor ſupporting another.

Several of the moſt heavy and productive taxes are ſo contrived, as to give an exemption to this pillar, thus ſtanding in its own defence. The tax upon beer brewed for ſale does not affect the ari-

* See Sir John Sinclair's Hiſtory of the Revenue. The land-tax in 1646 was £2,473,499.

ſtocracy, who brew their own beer free of this duty. It falls only on thoſe who have not conveniency or ability to brew, and who muſt purchaſe it in ſmall quantities. But what will mankind think of the juſtice of taxation, when they know, that this tax alone, from which the ariſtocracy are from circumſtances exempt, is nearly equal to the whole of the land-tax, being in the year 1788, and it is not leſs now, 1,666,152£. and with its proportion of the taxes on malt and hops, it exceeds it.—That a ſingle article, thus partially conſumed, and that chiefly by the working part, ſhould be ſubject to a tax, equal to that on the whole rental of a nation, is, perhaps, a fact not to be paralleled in the hiſtories of revenues.

This is one of the conſequences reſulting from an houſe of legiſlation, compoſed on the ground of a combination of common intereſt; for whatever their ſeparate politics as to parties may be, in this they are united. Whether a combination acts to raiſe the price of any article for ſale, or the rate of wages; or whether it acts to throw taxes from itſelf upon another claſs of the community, the principle and the effect are the ſame; and if the one be illegal, it will be difficult to ſhew that the other ought to exiſt.

It is to no uſe to ſay, that taxes are firſt propoſed in the houſe of commons; for as the other houſe has always a negative, it can always defend itſelf; and it would be ridiculous to ſuppoſe that its acquieſcence in the meaſures to be propoſed were not underſtood before hand. Beſides which, it

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has obtained ſo much influence by borough-traffic, and ſo many of its relations and connections are diſtributed on both ſides of the commons, as to give it, beſides an abſolute negative in one houſe, a preponderancy in the other, in all matters of common concern.

It is difficult to diſcover what is meant by the *landed intereſt*, if it does not mean a combination of ariſtocratical land-holders, oppoſing their own pecuniary intereſt to that of the farmer, and every branch of trade, commerce, and manufacture. In all other reſpects it is the only intereſt that needs no partial protection. It enjoys the general protection of the world. Every individual, high or low, is intereſted in the fruits of the earth; men, women, and children, of all ages and degrees, will turn out to aſſiſt the farmer, rather than a harveſt ſhould not be got in; and they will not act thus by any other property. It is the only one for which the common prayer of mankind is put up, and the only one that can never fail from the want of means. It is the intereſt, not of the policy, but of the exiſtence of man, and when it ceaſes he muſt ceaſe to be.

No other intereſt in a nation ſtands on the ſame united ſupport. Commerce, manufactures, arts, ſciences, and every thing elſe, compared with this, are ſupported but in parts. Their proſperity or their decay has not the ſame univerſal influence. When the vallies laugh and

ſing, it is not the farmer only, but all creation that rejoices. It is a proſperity that excludes all envy; and this cannot be ſaid of any thing elſe.

Why then does Mr. Burke talk of his houſe of peers, as the pillar of the landed intereſt? Were that pillar to ſink into the earth, the ſame landed property would continue, and the ſame ploughing, ſowing, and reaping would go on. The ariſtocracy are not the farmers who work the land, and raiſe the produce, but are the mere conſumers of the rent; and when compared with the active world, are the drones, a ſeraglio of males, who neither collect the honey nor form the hive, but exiſt only for lazy enjoyment.

Mr. Burke, in his firſt eſſay, called ariſtocracy, "*the Corinthian capital of poliſhed ſociety.*" Towards compleating the figure, he has now added the *pillar*; but ſtill the baſe is wanting; and whenever a nation chuſes to act a Samſon, not blind, but bold, down go the temple of Dagon, the Lords and the Philiſtines.

If a houſe of legiſlation is to be compoſed of men of one claſs, for the purpoſe of protecting a diſtinct intereſt, all the other intereſts ſhould have the ſame. The inequality, as well as the burthen of taxation, ariſes from admitting it in one caſe, and not in all. Had there been an houſe of farmers, there had been no game laws; or an houſe of merchants and manufacturers, the taxes had neither been ſo unequal nor ſo exceſſive. It is from the power of taxation being in

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the hands of thoſe who can throw ſo great a part of it from their own ſhoulders, that it has raged without a check.

Men of ſmall or moderate eſtates, are more injured by the taxes being thrown on articles of conſumption, than they are eaſed by warding it from landed property, for the following reaſons:

Firſt, They conſume more of the productive taxable articles, in proportion to their property, than thoſe of large eſtates.

Secondly, Their reſidence is chiefly in towns, and their property in houſes; and the encreaſe of the poor-rates, occaſioned by taxes on conſumption, is in much greater proportion than the land-tax has been favoured. In Birmingham, the poor-rates are not leſs than ſeven ſhillings in the pound. From this, as is already obſerved, the ariſtocracy are in a great meaſure exempt.

Theſe are but a part of the miſchiefs flowing from the wretched ſcheme of an houſe of peers.

As a combination, it can always throw a conſiderable portion of taxes from itſelf; and as an hereditary houſe, accountable to nobody, it reſembles a rotten borough, whoſe conſent is to be courted by intereſt. There are but few of its members, who are not in ſome mode or other participaters, or diſpoſers of the public money. One turns a candle-holder, or a lord in waiting; another a lord of the bed-chamber, a groom of the ſtole, or any inſignificant nominal office, to which a ſalary is annexed, paid out of the public

taxes, and which avoids the direct appearance of corruption. Such ſituations are derogatory to the character of man; and where they can be ſubmitted to, honour cannot reſide.

To all theſe are to be added the numerous dependants, the long liſt of younger branches and diſtant relations, who are to be provided for at the public expence: in ſhort, were an eſtimation to be made of the charge of ariſtocracy to a nation, it will be found nearly equal to that of ſupporting the poor. The Duke of Richmond alone (and there are caſes ſimilar to his) takes away as much for himſelf as would maintain two thouſand poor and aged perſons. Is it, then, any wonder, that under ſuch a ſyſtem of government, taxes and rates have multiplied to their preſent extent?

In ſtating theſe matters, I ſpeak an open and diſintereſted language, dictated by no paſſion but that of humanity. To me, who have not only refuſed offers, becauſe I thought them improper, but have declined rewards I might with reputation have accepted, it is no wonder that meanneſs and impoſition appear diſguſtful. Independence is my happineſs, and I view things as they are, without regard to place or perſon; my country is the world, and my religion is to do good.

Mr. Burke, in ſpeaking of the ariſtocratical law of primogeniture, ſays, "it is the ſtanding "law of our landed inheritance; and which, "without queſtion, has a tendency, and I think,"

continues he, "a happy tendency, to preſerve a "character of weight and conſequence."

Mr. Burke may call this law what he pleaſes, but humanity and impartial reflection will denounce it a law of brutal injuſtice. Were we not accuſtomed to the daily practice, and did we only hear of it as the law of ſome diſtant part of the world, we ſhould conclude that the legiſlators of ſuch countries had not yet arrived at a ſtate of civilization.

As to its preſerving a character of *weight and conſequence*, the caſe appears to me directly the reverſe. It is an attaint upon character; a ſort of privateering on family property. It may have weight among dependent tenants, but it gives none on a ſcale of national, and, much leſs of univerſal character. Speaking for myſelf, my parents were not able to give me a ſhilling, beyond what they gave me in education; and to do this they diſtreſſed themſelves: yet, I poſſeſs more of what is called conſequence, in the world, than any one in Mr. Burke's catalogue of ariſtocrats.

Having thus glanced at ſome of the defects of the two houſes of parliament, I proceed to what is called the crown upon which I ſhall be very conciſe.

It ſignifies a nominal office of a million ſterling a year, the buſineſs of which conſiſts in receiving the money. Whether the perſon be wiſe or fooliſh, ſane or inſane, a native or a foreigner, matters not. Every miniſtry acts upon the ſame

idea

idea that Mr. Burke writes, namely, that the people muſt be hood-winked, and held in ſuperſtitious ignorance by ſome bugbear or other; and what is called the crown anſwers this purpoſe, and therefore it anſwers all the purpoſes to be expected from it. This is more than can be ſaid of the other two branches.

The hazard to which this office is expoſed in all countries, is not from any thing that can happen to the man, but from what may happen to the nation—the danger of its coming to its ſenſes.

It has been cuſtomary to call the crown the executive power, and the cuſtom is continued, though the reaſon has ceaſed.

It was called the *executive*, becauſe the perſon whom it ſignified uſed, formerly, to ſit in the character of a judge, in adminiſtering or executing the laws. The tribunals were then a part of the court. The power, therefore, which is now called the judicial, is what was called the executive; and, conſequently, one or other of the terms is redundant, and one of the offices uſeleſs. When we ſpeak of the crown now, it means nothing; it ſignifies neither a judge nor a general: beſides which it is the laws that govern, and not the man. The old terms are kept up, to give an appearance of conſequence to empty forms; and the only effect they have is that of increaſing expences.

Before I proceed to the means of rendering governments more conducive to the general happineſs

happineſs of mankind, than they are at preſent, it will not be improper to take a review of the progreſs of taxation in England.

It is a general idea, that when taxes are once laid on, they are never taken off. However true this may have been of late, it was not always ſo. Either, therefore, the people of former times were more watchful over government than thoſe of the preſent, or government was adminiſtered with leſs extravagance.

It is now ſeven hundred years ſince the Norman conqueſt, and the eſtabliſhment of what is called the crown. Taking this portion of time in ſeven ſeparate periods of one hundred years each, the amount of the annual taxes, at each period, will be as follows:—

Annual amount of taxes levied by William the Conqueror, beginning in the year 1066, — —	£. 400,000
Annual amount of taxes at one hundred years from the conqueſt, (1166) —— ——	200,000
Annual amount of taxes at two hundred years from the conqueſt, (1266) —— ——	150,000
Annual amount of taxes at three hundred years from the conqueſt, (1366) —— ——	130,000
Annual amount of taxes at four hundred years from the conqueſt, (1466) —— ——	100,000

Theſe ſtatements, and thoſe which follow, are taken from Sir John Sinclair's Hiſtory of the Revenue; by which it appears, that taxes continued decreaſing for four hundred years, at the expiration of which time they were reduced three-fourths, viz. from four hundred thouſand pounds to one hundred thouſand. The people of England of the preſent day, have a traditionary and hiſtorical idea of the bravery of their anceſtors; but whatever their virtues or their vices might have been, they certainly were a people who would not be impoſed upon, and who kept government in awe as to taxation, if not as to principle. Though they were not able to expel the monarchical uſurpation, they reſtricted it to a republican œconomy of taxes.

Let us now review the remaining three hundred years.

Annual amount of taxes at five hundred years from the conqueſt, (1566) — —	£.500,000
Annual amount of taxes at ſix hundred years from the conqueſt, (1666) — —	1,800,000
Annual amount of taxes at the preſent time, (1791) ——	17,000,000

The difference between the firſt four hundred years and the laſt three, is ſo aſtoniſhing, as to warrant an opinion, that the national character of the Engliſh has changed. It would have been impoſſible

impoſſible to have dragooned the former Engliſh, into the exceſs of taxation that now exiſts; and when it is conſidered that the pay of the army, the navy, and of all the revenue-officers, is the ſame now as it was above a hundred years ago, when the taxes were not above a tenth part of what they are at preſent, it appears impoſſible to account for the enormous increaſe and expenditure, on any other ground, than extravagance, corruption, and intrigue *.

With

* Several of the court newſpapers have of late made frequent mention of Wat Tyler. That his memory ſhould be traduced by court ſycophants, and all thoſe who live on the ſpoil of a public, is not to be wondered at. He was, however, the means of checking the rage and injuſtice of taxation in his time, and the nation owed much to his valour. The hiſtory is concifely this:—In the time of Richard the ſecond, a poll-tax was levied, of one ſhilling per head, upon every perſon in the nation, of whatever eſtate or condition, on poor as well as rich, above the age of fifteen years. If any favour was ſhewn in the law, it was to the rich rather than to the poor; as no perſon could be charged more than twenty ſhillings for himſelf, family, and ſervants, though ever ſo numerous; while all other families, under the number of twenty, were charged per head. Poll-taxes had always been odious; but this being alſo oppreſſive and unjuſt, it excited, as it naturally muſt, univerſal deteſtation among the poor and middle claſſes. The perſon known by the name of Wat Tyler, whoſe proper name was Walter, and a tyler by trade, lived at Deptford. The gatherer of the poll-tax, on coming to his houſe, demanded tax for one of his daughters, whom Tyler declared was under the age of fifteen. The tax-gatherer inſiſted on ſatisfying himſelf, and began an indecent examination of the girl, which enraging the father, he ſtruck him with a hammer, that brought him to the ground, and was the cauſe of his death.

This

With the revolution of 1688, and more ſo ſince the Hanover ſucceſſion, came the deſtructive ſyſtem of continental intrigues, and the rage for foreign wars and foreign dominion; ſyſtems of ſuch ſecure myſtery that the expences admit of no accounts; a ſingle line ſtands for millions. To what exceſs taxation might have extended, had not the French revolution contributed to break up the ſyſtem, and put an end to pretences, is impoſſible to ſay. Viewed, as that revolution ought to be, as the fortunate means of leſſening the load of taxes of both countries, it is of as

This circumſtance ſerved to bring the diſcontents to an iſſue. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood eſpouſed the cauſe of Tyler, who, in a few days was joined, according to ſome hiſtories, by upwards of fifty thouſand men, and choſen their chief. With this force he marched to London, to demand an abolition of the tax, and a redreſs of other grievances. The court, finding itſelf in a forlorn condition, and unable to make reſiſtance, agreed, with Richard at its head, to hold a conference with Tyler in Smithfield, making many fair profeſſions, courtier like, of its diſpoſitions to redreſs the oppreſſions. While Richard and Tyler were in converſation on theſe matters, each being on horſeback, Walworth, then mayor of London, and one of the creatures of the court, watched an opportunity, and like a cowardly aſſaſſin, ſtabbed Tyler with a dagger; and two or three others falling upon him, he was inſtantly ſacrificed.

Tyler appears to have been an intrepid diſintereſted man, with reſpect to himſelf. All his propoſals made to Richard, were on a more juſt and public ground, than thoſe which had been made to John by the Barons; and notwithſtanding the ſycophancy of hiſtorians, and men like Mr. Burke, who ſeek to gloſs over a baſe action of the court by traducing Tyler, his fame will outlive their falſehood. If the Barons merited a monument to be erected in Runnymede, Tyler merits one in Smithfield.

much

much importance to England as to France; and, if properly improved to all the advantages of which it is capable, and to which it leads, deſerve as much celebration in one country as the other.

In purſuing this ſubject, I ſhall begin with the matter that firſt preſents itſelf, that of leſſening the burthen of taxes; and ſhall then add ſuch matters and propoſitions, reſpecting the three countries of England, France, and America, as the preſent proſpect of things appears to juſtify: I mean, an alliance of the three, for the purpoſes that will be mentioned in their proper place.

What has happened may happen again. By the ſtatement before ſhewn of the progreſs of taxation, it is ſeen, that taxes have been leſſened to a fourth part of what they had formerly been. Though the preſent circumſtances do not admit of the ſame reduction, yet it admits of ſuch a beginning, as may accomplish that end in leſs time, than in the former caſe.

The amount of taxes for the year, ending at Michaelmas 1788, was as follows:

Land-tax, - -	£ 1,950,000
Cuſtoms, - -	3,789,274
Exciſe, (including old and new malt,)	6,751,727
Stamps, - -	1,278,214
Miſcellaneous taxes and incidents,	1,803,755
	£ 15,572,970

Since the year 1788, upwards of one million, new taxes, have been laid on, beſides the produce from the lotteries; and as the taxes have in general been more productive ſince than before, the amount may be taken, in round numbers, at

£ 17,000,000

N. B. The expence of collection and the drawbacks, which together amount to nearly two millions, are paid out of the groſs amount; and the above is the nett ſum paid into the exchequer.

This ſum of ſeventeen millions is applied to two different purpoſes; the one to pay the intereſt of the national debt, the other to the current expences of each year. About nine millions are appropriated to the former; and the remainder, being nearly eight millions, to the latter. As to the million, ſaid to be applied to the reduction of the debt, it is ſo much like paying with one hand and taking out with the other, as not to merit much notice.

It happened, fortunately for France, that ſhe poſſeſſed national domains for paying off her debt, and thereby leſſening her taxes: but as this is not the caſe in England, her reduction of taxes can only take place by reducing the current expences, which may now be done to the amount of four or five millions annually, as will hereafter appear. When this is accompliſhed, it will more than counterbalance the enormous charge of the American war; and the ſaving will

be from the ſame ſource from whence the evil aroſe.

As to the national debt, however heavy the intereſt may be in taxes; yet, as it ſerves to keep alive a capital, uſeful to commerce, it balances by its effects a conſiderable part of its own weight; and as the quantity of gold and ſilver in England is, by ſome means or other, ſhort of its proper proportion *, (being not more than twenty millions, whereas it ſhould be ſixty,) it would, beſides the injuſtice, be bad policy to extinguiſh a capital that ſerves to ſupply that defect. But with reſpect to the current expence, whatever is ſaved therefrom is gain. The exceſs may ſerve to keep corruption alive, but it has no re-action on credit and commerce, like the intereſt of the debt.

It is now very probable, that the Engliſh government (I do not mean the nation) is unfriendly to the French revolution. Whatever ſerves to expoſe the intrigue and leſſen the influence of courts, by leſſening taxation, will be unwelcome to thoſe who feed upon the ſpoil. Whilſt the clamour of French intrigue, arbitrary power, popery, and wooden ſhoes could be kept up, the nation was eaſily allured and alarmed into taxes. Thoſe days are now paſt; deception, it is to be hoped, has reaped its laſt harveſt, and better times are in proſpect for both countries, and for the world.

* Foreign intrigue, foreign wars, and foreign dominions, will in a great meaſure account for the deficiency.

Taking it for granted, that an alliance may be formed between England, France, and America, for the purpoſes hereafter to be mentioned, the national expences of France and England may conſequently be leſſened. The ſame fleets and armies will no longer be neceſſary to either, and the reduction can be made ſhip for ſhip on each ſide. But to accompliſh theſe objects, the governments muſt neceſſarily be fitted to a common and correſpondent principle. Confidence can never take place, while an hoſtile diſpoſition remains in either, or where myſtery and ſecrecy on one ſide, is oppoſed to candour and openneſs on the other.

Theſe matters admitted, the national expences might be put back, *for the ſake of a precedent*, to what they were at ſome period when France and England were not enemies. This, conſequently, muſt be prior to the Hanover ſucceſſion, and alſo to the revolution of 1688 *. The firſt inſtance that

* I happened to be in England at the celebration of the centenary of the revolution of 1688. The characters of William and Mary have always appeared to me deteſtable; the one ſeeking to deſtroy his uncle, and the other her father, to get poſſeſſion of power themſelves; yet, as the nation was diſpoſed to think ſomething of that event, I felt hurt at ſeeing it aſcribe the whole reputation of it to a man who had undertaken it as a jobb, and who, beſides what he otherwiſe got, charged ſix hundred thouſand pounds for the expence of the little fleet that brought him from Holland. George the Firſt acted the ſame cloſe-fiſted part as William had done, and bought the Duchy of Bremin with the money he got from England, two hundred

that preſents itſelf, antecedent to thoſe dates, is in the very waſteful and profligate times of Charles the Second; at which time England and France acted as allies. If I have choſen a period of great extravagance, it will ſerve to ſhew modern extravagance in a ſtill worſe light; eſpecially as the pay of the navy, the army, and the revenue officers has not encreaſed ſince that time.

The peace eſtabliſhment was then as follows:— See Sir John Sinclair's Hiſtory of the Revenue.

Navy,	- -	300,000
Army,	- -	212,000
Ordnance,	- -	40,000
Civil Liſt,	- -	462,115
		£ 1,014,115

The parliament, however, ſettled the whole annual peace eſtabliſhment at 1,200,000 *. If we go back to the time of Elizabeth, the amount

hundred and fifty thouſand pounds over and above his pay as king; and having thus purchaſed it at the expence of England, added it to his Hanoverian dominions for his own private profit. In fact, every nation that does not govern itſelf, is governed as a jobb. England has been the prey of jobbs ever ſince the revolution.

* Charles, like his predeceſſors and ſucceſſors, finding that war was the harveſt of governments, engaged in a war with the Dutch, the expence of which encreaſed the annual expenditure to £ 1,800,000, as ſtated under the date of 1666; but the peace eſtabliſhment was but £ 1,200,000.

of all the taxes was but half a million, yet the nation ſees nothing during that period, that reproaches it with want of conſequence.

All circumſtances then taken together, ariſing from the French revolution, from the approaching harmony and reciprocal intereſt of the two nations, the abolition of court intrigue on both ſides, and the progreſs of knowledge in the ſcience of government, the annual expenditure might be put back to one million and an half, viz.

Navy,	—	—	500,000
Army,	—	—	500,000
Expences of government,			500,000
			£. 1,500,000

Even this ſum is ſix times greater than the expences of government are in America, yet the civil internal government in England, (I mean that adminiſtered by means of quarter ſeſſions, juries, and aſſize, and which, in fact, is nearly the whole, and performed by the nation,) is leſs expence upon the revenue, than the ſame ſpecies and portion of government is in America.

It is time that nations ſhould be rational, and not be governed like animals, for the pleaſure of their riders. To read the hiſtory of kings, a man would be almoſt inclined to ſuppoſe that government conſiſted in ſtag-hunting, and that every nation paid a million a year to a huntſman. Man ought to have pride, or ſhame enough to bluſh at being thus impoſed upon, and when he

feel

feel his proper character, he will. Upon all ſubjects of this nature, there is often paſſing in the mind, a train of ideas he has not yet accuſtomed himſelf to encourage and communicate. Reſtrained by ſomething that puts on the character of prudence, he acts the hypocrite upon himſelf as well as to others. It is, however, curious to obſerve how ſoon this ſpell can be diſſolved. A ſingle expreſſion, boldly conceived and uttered, will ſometimes put a whole company into their proper feelings; and whole nations are acted upon in the ſame manner.

As to the offices of which any civil government may be compoſed, it matters but little by what names they are deſcribed. In the rotine of buſineſs, as before obſerved, whether a man be ſtiled a preſident, a king, an emperor, a ſenator, or any thing elſe, it is impoſſible that any ſervice he can perform, can merit from a nation more than ten thouſand pounds a year; and as no man ſhould be paid beyond his ſervices, ſo every man of a proper heart will not accept more. Public money ought to be touched with the moſt ſcrupulous conſciouſneſs of honour. It is not the produce of riches only, but of the hard earnings of labour and poverty. It is drawn even from the bitterneſs of want and miſery. Not a beggar paſſes, or periſhes in the ſtreets, whoſe mite is not in that maſs.

Were it poſſible that the Congreſs of America, could be ſo loſt to their duty, and to the intereſt of their conſtituents, as to offer General Waſhington,

ton, as preſident of America, a million a year, he would not, and he could not, accept it. His ſenſe of honour is of another kind. It has coſt England almoſt ſeventy millions ſterling, to maintain a family imported from abroad, of very inferior capacity to thouſands in the nation; and ſcarcely a year has paſſed that has not produced ſome new mercenary application. Even the phyſicians bills have been ſent to the public to be paid. No wonder that jails are crowded, and taxes and poor-rates encreaſed. Under ſuch ſyſtems, nothing is to be looked for but what has already happened; and as to reformation, whenever it come, it muſt be from the nation, and not from the goverment.

To ſhew that the ſum of five hundred thouſand pounds is more than ſufficient to defray all the expences of government, excluſive of navies and armies, the following eſtimate is added for any country, of the ſame extent as England.

In the firſt place, three hundred repreſentatives, fairly elected, are ſufficient for all the purpoſes to which legiſlation can apply, and preferable to a larger number. They may be divided into two or three houſes, or meet in one, as in France, or in any manner a conſtitution ſhall direct.

As repreſentation is always conſidered, in free countries, as the moſt honourable of all ſtations, the allowance made to it is merely to defray the expence which the repreſentatives incur by that ſervice, and not to it as an office.

If

If an allowance, at the rate of five hundred pounds *per ann.* be made to every repreſentative, deducting for non-attendance, the expence, if the whole number attended for ſix months, each year, would be £. 75,000

The official departments cannot reaſonably exceed the following number, with the ſalaries annexed:

Three offices, at ten thouſand pounds each			30,000
Ten ditto,	at £.	5000 each	50,000
Twenty ditto,	at £.	2000 each	40,000
Forty ditto,	at £.	1000 each	40,000
Two hundred ditto,	at £.	500 each	100,000
Three hundred ditto,	at £.	200 each	60,000
Five hundred ditto,	at £.	100 each	50,000
Seven hundred ditto,	at £.	75 each	52,500
			£. 497,500

If a nation chuſe, it can deduct four *per cent.* from all offices, and make one of twenty thouſand *per ann.*

All revenue officers are paid out of the monies they collect, and therefore, are not in this eſtimation.

The foregoing is not offered as an exact detail of offices, but to ſhew the number and rate of ſalaries which five hundred thouſand pounds will ſupport; and it will, on experience, be found impracticable to find buſineſs ſufficient to juſtify even this expence. As to the manner in which

office

office buſineſs is now performed, the Chiefs, in ſeveral offices, ſuch as the poſt-office, and certain offices in the exchequer, &c. do little more than ſign their names three or four times a year; and the whole duty is performed by under clerks.

Taking, therefore, one million and an half as a ſufficient peace eſtabliſhment for all the honeſt purpoſes of government, which is three hundred thouſand pounds more than the peace eſtabliſhment in the profligate and prodigal times of Charles the Second, (notwithſtanding, as has been already obſerved, the pay and ſalaries of the army, navy, and revenue officers, continue the ſame as at that period,) there will remain a ſurplus of upwards of ſix millions out of the preſent current expences. The queſtion then will be, how to diſpoſe of this ſurplus.

Whoever has obſerved the manner in which trade and taxes twiſt themſelves together, muſt be ſenſible of the impoſſibility of ſeparating them ſuddenly.

Firſt. Becauſe the articles now on hand are already charged with the duty, and the reduction cannot take place on the preſent ſtock.

Secondly. Becauſe, on all thoſe articles on which the duty is charged in the groſs, ſuch as *per* barrel, hogſhead, hundred weight, or tun, the abolition of the duty does not admit of being divided down ſo as fully to relieve the conſumer, who purchaſes by the pint, or the pound. The laſt duty laid on ſtrong beer and ale, was three

ſhillings

ſhillings *per* barrel, which, if taken off, would leſſen the purchaſe only half a farthing *per* pint, and conſequently, would not reach to practical relief.

This being the condition of a great part of the taxes, it will be neceſſary to look for ſuch others as are free from this embarraſſment, and where the relief will be direct and viſible, and capable of immediate operation.

In the firſt place, then, the poor-rates are a direct tax which every houſe-keeper feels, and who knows alſo, to a farthing, the ſum which he pays. The national amount of the whole of the poor rates is not poſitively known, but can be procured. Sir John Sinclair, in his Hiſtory of the Revenue, has ſtated it at £. 2,100,587. A conſiderable part of which is expended in litigations, in which the poor, inſtead of being relieved, are tormented. The expence, however, is the ſame to the pariſh from whatever cauſe it ariſes.

In Birmingham, the amount of the poor-rates is fourteen thouſand pounds a year. This, though a large ſum, is moderate, compared with the population. Birmingham is ſaid to contain ſeventy thouſand ſouls, and on a proportion of ſeventy thouſand to fourteen thouſand pounds poor-rates, the national amount of poor-rates, taking the population of England at ſeven millions, would be but one million four hundred thouſand pounds. It is, therefore, moſt probable, that the population of Birmingham is over-rated.

Fourteen

Fourteen thouſand pounds is the proportion upon fifty thouſand ſouls, taking two millions of poor-rates as the national amount.

Be it, however, what it may, it is no other than the conſequence of the exceſſive burthen of taxes, for, at the time when the taxes were very low, the poor were able to maintain themſelves; and there were no poor-rates *. In the preſent ſtate of things, a labouring man, with a wife and two or three children, does not pay leſs than between ſeven and eight pounds a year in taxes. He is not ſenſible of this, becauſe it is diſguiſed to him in the articles which he buys, and he thinks only of their dearneſs; but as the taxes take from him, at leaſt, a fourth part of his yearly earnings, he is conſequently diſabled from providing for a family, eſpecially, if himſelf, or any of them, are afflicted with ſickneſs.

The firſt ſtep, therefore, of practical relief, would be to aboliſh the poor-rates entirely, and in lieu thereof, to make a remiſſion of taxes to the poor of double the amount of the preſent poor-rates, viz. four millions annually out of the ſurplus taxes. By this meaſure, the poor would be benefited two millions, and the houſe-keepers two millions. This alone would be equal to a reduction of one hundred and twenty millions of the national

* Poor-rates began about the time of Henry the Eighth, when the taxes began to encreaſe, and they have encreaſed as the taxes encreaſed ever ſince.

debt,

debt, and conſequently equal to the whole expence of the American war.

It will then remain to be conſidered, which is the moſt effectual mode of diſtributing this remiſſion of four millions.

It is eaſily ſeen, that the poor are generally compoſed of large families of children, and old people paſt their labour. If theſe two claſſes are provided for, the remedy will ſo far reach to the full extent of the caſe, that what remains will be incidental, and, in a great meaſure, fall within the compaſs of benefit clubs, which, though of humble invention, merit to be ranked among the beſt of modern inſtitutions.

Admitting England to contain ſeven million of ſouls; if one-fifth thereof are of that claſs of poor which need ſupport, the number will be one million four hundred thouſand. Of this number, one hundred and forty thouſand will be aged poor, as will be hereafter ſhewn, and for which a diſtinct proviſion will be propoſed.

There will then remain one million two hundred and ſixty thouſand, which, at five ſouls to each family, amount to two hundred and fifty-two thouſand families, rendered poor from the expence of children and the weight of taxes.

The number of children under fourteen years of age, in each of thoſe families, will be found to be about five to every two families; ſome having two, and others three; ſome one, and others four; ſome none, and others five; but it rarely happens

that

that more than five are under fourteen years of age, and after this age they are capable of ſervice or of being apprenticed.

Allowing five children (under fourteen years) to every two families,

The number of children will be - 630,000

The number of parents were they all living, would be - - 504,000

It is certain, that if the children are provided for, the parents are relieved of conſequence, becauſe it is from the expence of bringing up children that their poverty ariſes.

Having thus aſcertained the greateſt number that can be ſuppoſed to need ſupport on account of young families, I proceed to the mode of relief or diſtribution, which is,

To pay as a remiſſion of taxes to every poor family, out of the ſurplus taxes, and in room of poor-rates, four pounds a year for every child under fourteen years of age; enjoining the parents of ſuch children to ſend them to ſchool, to learn reading, writing, and common arithmetic; the miniſters of every pariſh, of every denomination, to certify jointly to an office, for that purpoſe, that this duty is performed.

The amount of this expence will be,

For ſix hundred and thirty thouſand children, at four pounds *per ann.* each, £.2,520,000

By adopting this method, not only the poverty of the parents will be relieved, but ignorance will be baniſhed from the riſing generation, and the

number

number of poor will hereafter become leſs, becauſe their abilities, by the aid of education, will be greater. Many a youth, with good natural genius, who is apprenticed to a mechanical trade, ſuch as a carpenter, joiner, millwright, ſhipwright, blackſmith, &c. is prevented getting forward the whole of his life, from the want of a little common education when a boy.

I now proceed to the caſe of the aged.

I divide age into two claſſes. Firſt, the approach of age beginning at fifty. Secondly, old age commencing at ſixty.

At fifty, though the mental faculties of man are in full vigour, and his judgment better than at any preceeding date, the bodily powers for laborious life are on the decline. He cannot bear the ſame quantity of fatigue as at an earlier period. He begins to earn leſs, and is leſs capable of enduring wind and weather; and in thoſe more retired employments where much ſight is required, he fails apace, and ſees himſelf, like an old horſe, beginning to be turned adrift.

At ſixty his labour ought to be over, at leaſt from direct neceſſity. It is painful to ſee old age working itſelf to death, in what are called civilized countries, for daily bread.

To form ſome judgment of the number of thoſe above fifty years of age, I have ſeveral times counted the perſons I met in the ſtreets of London, men, women, and children, and have generally found that the average is about one in ſixteen or

ſeventeen.

ſeventeen. If it be ſaid that aged perſons do not come much in the ſtreets, ſo neither do infants; and a great proportion of grown children are in ſchools, and in work ſhops as apprentices. Taking then ſixteen for a diviſor, the whole number of perſons, in England, of fifty years and upwards of both ſexes, rich and poor, will be four hundred and twenty thouſand.

The perſons to be provided for out of this groſs number will be, huſbandmen, common labourers, journeymen of every trade and their wives, ſailors, and diſbanded ſoldiers, worn out ſervants of both ſexes, and poor widows.

There will be alſo a conſiderable number of middling tradeſmen, who having lived decently in the former part of life, begin, as age approaches, to loſe their buſineſs, and at laſt fall to decay.

Beſides theſe, there will be conſtantly thrown off from the revolutions of that wheel, which no man can ſtop, nor regulate, a number from every claſs of life connected with commerce and adventure.

To provide for all thoſe accidents, and whatever elſe may befal, I take the number of perſons, who at one time or other of their lives, after fifty years of age, may feel it neceſſary or comfortable to be better ſupported, than they can ſupport themſelves, and that not as a matter of grace and favour, but of right, at one third of the whole number, which is one hundred and forty thouſand, as ſtated in page 125, and for whom a diſtinct proviſion was propoſed to be made. If there be

more

more, ſociety, notwithſtanding the ſhew and pompoſity of government, is in a deplorable condition in England.

Of this one hundred and forty thouſand, I take one half, ſeventy thouſand, to be of the age of fifty and under ſixty, and the other half to be ſixty years and upwards.—Having thus aſcertained the probable proportion of the number of aged perſons, I proceed to the mode of rendering their condition comfortable, which is,

To pay to every ſuch perſon of the age of fifty years, and until he ſhall arrive at the age of ſixty, the ſum of ſix pounds *per ann.* out of the ſurplus taxes; and ten pounds *per ann.* during life after the age of ſixty. The expence of which will be,

Seventy thouſand perſons at £.6 *per ann.*	420,000
Seventy thouſand ditto at £.10 *per ann.*	700,000
£.	1,120,000

This ſupport, as already remarked, is not of the nature of a charity, but of a right. Every perſon in England, male and female, pays on an average in taxes, two pounds eight ſhillings and ſixpence *per ann.* from the day of his (or her) birth; and, if the expence of collection be added, he pays two pounds eleven ſhillings and ſixpence; conſequently, at the end of fifty years he has paid one hundred and twenty-eight pounds fifteen ſhillings; and at ſixty, one hundred and fifty-four pounds ten ſhillings. Converting, therefore, his (or her) in-

dividual tax into a tontine, the money he ſhall receive after fifty years, is but little more than the legal intereſt of the nett money he has paid; the reſt is made up from thoſe whoſe circumſtances do not require them to draw ſuch ſupport, and the capital in both caſes defrays the expences of government. It is on this ground that I have extended the probable claims to one third of the number of aged perſons in the nation.---Is it then better that the lives of one hundred and forty thouſand aged perſons be rendered comfortable, or that a million a year of public money be expended on any one individual, and him often of the moſt worthleſs or inſignificant character? Let reaſon and juſtice, let honour and humanity, let even hypocriſy, ſycophancy and Mr. Burke, let George, let Louis, Leopold, Frederic, Catharine, Cornwallis, or Tippoo Saib, anſwer the queſtion *.

The

* Reckoning the taxes by families, five to a family, each family pays on an average, 12*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* *per ann.* to this ſum are to be added the poor-rates. Though all pay taxes in the articles they conſume, all do not pay poor-rates. About two millions are exempted, ſome as not being houſe-keepers, others as not being able, and the poor themſelves who receive the relief. The average, therefore, of poor-rates on the remaining number, is forty ſhillings for every family of five perſons, which makes the whole average amount of taxes and rates, 14*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* For ſix perſons, 17*l.* 17*s.* For ſeven perſons, 20*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.*

The average of taxes in America, under the new or repreſentative ſyſtem of government, including the intereſt of the debt contracted in the war, and taking the population at four million of ſouls, which it now amounts to, and it is daily encreaſing, is five

ſhillings

The ſum thus remitted to the poor will be,

To two hundred and fifty-two thouſand poor families, containing ſix hundred and thirty thouſand children,	2,520,000
To one hundred and forty thouſand aged perſons, - -	1,120,000
	£ 3,640,000

There will then remain three hundred and ſixty thouſand pounds out of the four millions, part of which may be applied as follows:

After all the above caſes are provided for, there will ſtill be a number of families who, though not properly of the claſs of poor, yet find it difficult to give education to their children; and ſuch children, under ſuch a caſe, would be in a worſe condition than if their parents were actually poor. A nation under a well regulated goverment, ſhould permit none to remain uninſtructed. It is monarchical and ariſtocratical government only that requires ignorance for its ſupport.

Suppoſe then four hundred thouſand children to be in this condition, which is a greater number

ſhillings per head, men, women, and children. The difference, therefore, between the two governments, is as under,

	England.			America.		
	l.	*s.*	*d.*	*l.*	*s.*	*d.*
For a family of five perſons	14	17	6	1	5	0
For a family of ſix perſons	17	17	0	1	10	0
For a family of ſeven perſons	20	16	6	1	15	0

than ought to be ſuppoſed, after the proviſions already made, the method will be,

To allow for each of thoſe children ten ſhillings a year for the expence of ſchooling, for ſix years each, which will give them ſix months ſchooling each year, and half a crown a year for paper and ſpelling books.

The expence of this will be annually* £250,000

There will then remain one hundred and ten thouſand pounds.

Notwithſtanding the great modes of relief which the beſt inſtituted and beſt principled government may deviſe, there will ſtill be a number of ſmaller caſes, which it is good policy as well as beneficence in a nation to conſider.

Were twenty ſhillings to be given to every woman immediately on the birth of a child, who ſhould make the demand, and none will make it

* Public ſchools do not anſwer the general purpoſe of the poor. They are chiefly in corporation towns, from which the country towns and villages are excluded; or if admitted, the diſtance occaſions a great loſs of time. Education, to be uſeful to the poor, ſhould be on the ſpot; and the beſt method, I believe, to accompliſh this, is to enable the parents to pay the expence themſelves. There are always perſons of both ſexes to be found in every village, eſpecially when growing into years, capable of ſuch an undertaking. Twenty children, at ten ſhillings each, (and that not more than ſix months each year) would be as much as ſome livings amount to in the remote parts of England; and there are often diſtreſſed clergymen's widows to whom ſuch an income would be acceptable. Whatever is given on this account to children anſwers two purpoſes, to them it is education, to thoſe who educate them it is a livelihood.

beyond

whoſe circumſtances do not require it, it might relieve a great deal of inſtant diſtreſs.

There are about two hundred thouſand births yearly in England; and if claimed, by one fourth, The amount would be - 50,000

And twenty ſhillings to every new-married couple who ſhould claim in like manner. This would not exceed the ſum of - £. 20,000

Alſo twenty thouſand pounds to be appropriated to defray the funeral expences of perſons, who, travelling for work, may die at a diſtance from their friends. By relieving pariſhes from this charge, the ſick ſtranger will be better treated.

I ſhall finiſh this part of the ſubject with a plan adapted to the particular condition of a metropolis, ſuch as London.

Caſes are continually occurring in a metropolis different to thoſe which occur in the country, and for which a different, or rather an additional mode of relief is neceſſary. In the country, even in large towns, people have a knowledge of each other, and diſtreſs never riſes to that extreme height it ſometimes does in a metropolis. There is no ſuch thing in the country as perſons, in the literal ſenſe of the word, ſtarved to death, or dying with cold from the want of a lodging. Yet ſuch caſes, and others equally as miſerable, happen in London.

Many a youth comes up to London full of expectations, and with little or no money, and unleſs he gets immediate employment he is already

half undone; and boys bred up in London without any means of a livelihood, and as it often happens of diſſolute parents, are in a ſtill worſe condition; and ſervants long out of place are not much better off. In ſhort, a world of little caſes are continually ariſing, which buſy or affluent life knows not of, to open the firſt door to diſtreſs. Hunger is not among the poſtponeable wants, and a day, even a few hours, in ſuch a condition, is often the criſis of a life of ruin.

Theſe circumſtances, which are the general cauſe of the little thefts and pilferings that lead to greater, may be prevented. There yet remain twenty thouſand pounds out of the four millions of ſurplus taxes, which, with another fund hereafter to be mentioned, amounting to about twenty thouſand pounds more, cannot be better applied than to this purpoſe. The plan then will be,

Firſt, To erect two or more buildings, or take ſome already erected, capable of containing at leaſt ſix thouſand perſons, and to have in each of theſe places as many kinds of employment as can be contrived, ſo that every perſon who ſhall come may find ſomething which he or ſhe can do.

Secondly, To receive all who ſhall come, without enquiring who or what they are. The only condition to be, that for ſo much, or ſo many hours work, each perſon ſhall receive ſo many meals of wholeſome food, and a warm lodging, at leaſt as good as a barrack. That a certain portion of what each perſon's work ſhall be worth ſhall be reſerved,

and

and given to him, or her, on their going away; and that each perſon ſhall ſtay as long, or as ſhort time, or come as often as he chuſe, on theſe conditions.

If each perſon ſtaid three months, it would aſſiſt by rotation twenty-four thouſand perſons annually, though the real number, at all times, would be but ſix thouſand. By eſtabliſhing an aſylum of this kind, ſuch perſons to whom temporary diſtreſſes occur, would have an opportunity to recruit themſelves, and be enabled to look out for better employment.

Allowing that their labour paid but one half the expence of ſupporting them, after reſerving a portion of their earnings for themſelves, the ſum of forty thouſand pounds additional would defray all other charges for even a greater number than ſix thouſand.

The fund very properly convertible to this purpoſe, in addition to the twenty thouſand pounds, remaining of the former fund, will be the produce of the tax upon coals, and ſo iniquitouſly and wantonly applied to the ſupport of the Duke of Richmond. It is horrid that any man, more eſpecially at the price coals now are, ſhould live on the diſtreſſes of a community; and any government permitting ſuch an abuſe, deſerves to be diſmiſſed. This fund is ſaid to be about twenty thouſand pounds *per annum*.

I ſhall now conclude this plan with enumerating the ſeveral particulars, and then proceed to other matters.

The enumeration is as follows:

Firſt, Abolition of two million poor-rates.

Secondly, Proviſion for two hundred and fifty-two thouſand poor families.

Thirdly, Education for one million and thirty thouſand children.

Fourthly, Comfortable proviſion for one hundred and forty thouſand aged perſons.

Fifthly, Donation of twenty ſhillings each for fifty thouſand births.

Sixthly, Donation of twenty ſhillings each for twenty thouſand marriages.

Seventhly, Allowance of twenty thouſand pounds for the funeral expences of perſons travelling for work, and dying at a diſtance from their friends.

Eighthly, Employment, at all times, for the caſual poor in the cities of London and Weſtminſter.

By the operation of this plan, the poor laws, thoſe inſtruments of civil torture, will be ſuperceded, and the waſteful expence of litigation prevented. The hearts of the humane will not be ſhocked by ragged and hungry children, and perſons of ſeventy and eighty years of age begging for bread. The dying poor will not be dragged from place to place to breathe their laſt, as a repriſal of pariſh upon pariſh. Widows will have a maintenance for their children, and not be carted away, on the death of their huſbands, like culprits and criminals;

and

and children will no longer be conſidered as encreaſing the diſtreſſes of their parents. The haunts of the wretched will be known, becauſe it will be to their advantage, and the number of petty crimes, the offſpring of diſtreſs and poverty, will be leſſened. The poor, as well as the rich, will then be intereſted in the ſupport of government, and the cauſe and apprehenſion of riots and tumults will ceaſe.—Ye who ſit in eaſe, and ſolace yourſelves in plenty, and ſuch there are in Turkey and Ruſſia, as well as in England, and who ſay to yourſelves, "Are "we not well off," have ye thought of theſe things? When ye do, ye will ceaſe to ſpeak and feel for yourſelves alone.

The plan is eaſy in practice. It does not embarraſs trade by a ſudden interruption in the order of taxes, but effects the relief by changing the application of them; and the money neceſſary for the purpoſe can be drawn from the exciſe collections, which are made eight times a year in every market town in England.

Having now arranged and concluded this ſubject, I proceed to the next.

Taking the preſent current expences at ſeven millions and an half, which is the leaſt amount they are now at, there will remain (after the ſum of one million and an half be taken for the new current expences, and four millions for the before-mentioned ſervice) the ſum of two millions; part of which to be applied as follows:

Though

Though fleets and armies, by an alliance with France, will, in a great meaſure, become uſeleſs, yet the perſons who have devoted themſelves to thoſe ſervices, and have thereby unfitted themſelves for other lines of life, are not to be ſufferers by the means that make others happy. They are a different deſcription of men to thoſe who form or hang about a court.

A part of the army will remain at leaſt for ſome years, and alſo of the navy, for which a proviſion is already made in the former part of this plan of one million, which is almoſt half a million more than the peace eſtabliſhment of the army and navy in the prodigal times of Charles the Second.

Suppoſe then fifteen thouſand ſoldiers to be diſbanded, and to allow to each of thoſe men three ſhillings a week during life, clear of all deductions, to be paid in the ſame manner as the Chelſea College penſioners are paid, and for them to return to their trades and their friends; and alſo to add fifteen thouſand ſixpences per week to the pay of the ſoldiers who ſhall remain; the annual expence will be,

To the pay of fifteen thouſand diſbanded ſoldiers, at three ſhillings per week,	-	£ 117,000
Additional pay to the remaining ſoldiers,	-	19,500
Carried forward	-	136,500

Suppoſe

Brought over	136,500
Suppoſe that the pay to the officers of the diſbanded corps be of the ſame amount as the ſum allowed to the men,	117,000
	253,500
To prevent bulky eſtimations, admit the ſame ſum to the diſbanded navy as to the army, and the ſame increaſe of pay,	253,500
Total	507,000

Every year ſome part of this ſum of half a million (I omit the odd ſeven thouſand pounds for the purpoſe of keeping the account unembarraſſed) will fall in, and the whole of it in time, as it is on the ground of life annuities, except the encreaſed pay of twenty-nine thouſand pounds. As it falls in, a part of the taxes may be taken off; for inſtance, when thirty thouſand pounds fall in the duty on hops may be wholly taken off; and as other parts fall in, the duties on candles and ſoap may be leſſened, till at laſt they will totally ceaſe.

There now remains at leaſt one million and an half of ſurplus taxes.

The tax on houſes and windows is one of thoſe direct taxes, which, like the poor-rates, is not confounded with trade; and, when taken off, the relief

lief will be inſtantly felt. This tax falls heavy on the middling claſs of people.

The amount of this tax by the returns of 1788, was,

		l.	s.	d.
Houſes and windows by the act of 1766,	—	385,459	11	7
Ditto ditto by the act of 1779,	—	130,739	14	5½
	Total	516,199	6	0½

If this tax be ſtruck off, there will then remain about one million of ſurplus taxes, and as it is always proper to keep a ſum in reſerve, for incidental matters, it may be beſt not to extend reductions further, in the firſt inſtance, but to conſider what may be accompliſhed by other modes of reform.

Among the taxes moſt heavily felt is the commutation tax. I ſhall, therefore, offer a plan for its abolition, by ſubſtituting another in its place, which will affect three objects at once:

Firſt, That of removing the burthen to where it can beſt be borne.

Secondly, Reſtoring juſtice among families by a diſtribution of property.

Thirdly, Extirpating the overgrown influence ariſing from the unnatural law of primogeniture, and which is one of the principal ſources of corruption at elections.

The

The amount of the commutation tax by the returns of 1788, was, —— £771,657 0 0

When taxes are propoſed, the country is amuſed by the plauſible language of taxing luxuries. One thing is called a luxury at one time, and ſomething elſe at another; but the real luxury does not conſiſt in the article, but in the means of procuring it, and this is always kept out of ſight.

I know not why any plant or herb of the field ſhould be a greater luxury in one country than another, but an overgrown eſtate in either is a luxury at all times, and as ſuch is the proper object of taxation. It is, therefore, right to take thoſe kind tax-making gentlemen up on their own word, and argue on the principle themſelves have laid down, that of *taxing luxuries*. If they, or their champion Mr. Burke, who, I fear, is growing out of date like the man in armour, can prove that an eſtate of twenty, thirty, or forty thouſand pounds a year is not a luxury, I will give up the argument.

Admitting that any annual ſum, ſay for inſtance, one thouſand pounds, is neceſſary or ſufficient for the ſupport of a family, conſequently the ſecond thouſand is of the nature of a luxury, the third ſtill more ſo, and by proceeding on, we ſhall at laſt arrive at a ſum that may not improperly be called a prohibitable luxury. It would be impolitic to ſet bounds to property acquired by induſtry, and therefore it is right to place the prohibition

beyond the probable acquiſition to which induſtry can extend; but there ought to be a limit to property, or the accumulation of it, by bequeſt. It ſhould paſs in ſome other line. The richeſt in every nation have poor relations, and thoſe often very near in conſanguinity.

The following table of progreſſive taxation is conſtructed on the above principles, and as a ſubſtitute for the commutation tax. It will reach the point of prohibition by a regular operation, and thereby ſupercede the ariſtocratical law of primogeniture.

TABLE I.

A tax on all eſtates of the clear yearly value of fifty pounds, after deducting the land tax, and up

		s.	*d.*	
To £ 500	—	0	3	per pound
From 500 to 1000	—	0	6	per pound
On the ſecond thouſand		0	9	per pound
On the third ditto	—	1	0	per pound
On the fourth ditto		1	6	per pound
On the fifth ditto	—	2	0	per pound
On the ſixth ditto	—	3	0	per pound
On the ſeventh ditto		4	0	per pound
On the eighth ditto		5	0	per pound
On the ninth ditto	—	6	0	per pound
On the tenth ditto	—	7	0	per pound
On the eleventh ditto		8	0	per pound
On the twelfth ditto		9	0	per pound

	s.	*d.*	
On the thirteenth ditto	10	0	per pound
On the fourteenth ditto	11	0	per pound
On the fifteenth ditto	12	0	per pound
On the ſixteenth ditto	13	0	per pound
On the ſeventeenth ditto	14	0	per pound
On the eighteenth ditto	15	0	per pound
On the nineteenth ditto	16	0	per pound
On the twentieth ditto	17	0	per pound
On the twenty-firſt ditto	18	0	per pound
On the twenty-ſecond ditto	19	0	per pound
On the twenty-third ditto	20	0	per pound

The foregoing table ſhews the progreſſion per pound on every progreſſive thouſand. The following table ſhews the amount of the tax on every thouſand ſeparately, and in the laſt column, the total amount of all the ſeparate ſums collected.

TABLE II.

		d.		*l.*	*s.*	*d.*
An eſtate of £	50	*per ann.* at	3 per pd. pays	0	12	6
	100		3	1	5	0
	200		3	2	10	0
	300		3	3	15	0
	400		3	5	0	0
	500		3	7	5	0

After 500*l.*—the tax of ſixpence per pound takes place on the ſecond 500*l.*—conſequently an eſtate of 1000*l. per ann.* pays 21*l.* 15*s.* and ſo on,

		l.	*s.*	*d.*		*l.*	*s.*	Total amount. *l.*	*s.*
For the	1ſt	500 at	0	3	per pound	7	5	21	15
	2d	500 at	0	6		14	10		
	2d	1000 at	0	9		37	10	59	5
	3d	1000 at	1	0		50	0	109	5
	4th	1000 at	1	6		75	0	184	5
	5th	1000 at	2	0		100	0	284	5
	6th	1000 at	3	0		150	0	434	5
	7th	1000 at	4	0		200	0	634	5
	8th	1000 at	5	0		250	0	880	5
	9th	1000 at	6	0		300	0	1180	5
	10th	1000 at	7	0		350	0	1530	5
	11th	1000 at	8	0		400	0	1930	5
	12th	1000 at	9	0		450	0	2380	5
	13th	1000 at	10	0		500	0	2880	5
	14th	1000 at	11	0		550	0	3430	5
	15th	1000 at	12	0		600	0	4030	5
	16th	1000 at	13	0		650	0	4680	5
	17th	1000 at	14	0		700	0	5380	5
	18th	1000 at	15	0		750	0	6130	5
	19th	1000 at	16	0		800	0	6930	5
	20th	1000 at	17	0		850	0	7780	5
	21ſt	1000 at	18	0		900	0	8680	5
	22d	1000 at	19	0		950	0	9630	5
	23d	1000 at	20	0		1000	0	10630	5

At

At the twenty-third thouſand the tax becomes twenty ſhillings in the pound, and conſequently every thouſand beyond that ſum can produce no profit but by dividing the eſtate. Yet formidable as this tax appears, it will not, I believe, produce ſo much as the commutation tax; ſhould it produce more, it ought to be lowered to that amount upon eſtates under two or three thouſand a year.

On ſmall and middling eſtates it is lighter (as it is intended to be) than the commutation tax. It is not till after ſeven or eight thouſand a year that it begins to be heavy. The object is not ſo much the produce of the tax, as the juſtice of the meaſure. The ariſtocracy has ſcreened itſelf too much, and this ſerves to reſtore a part of the loſt equilibrium.

As an inſtance of its ſcreening itſelf, it is only neceſſary to look back to the firſt eſtabliſhment of the exciſe laws, at what is called the Reſtoration, or the coming of Charles the Second. The ariſtocratical intereſt then in power, commuted the feudal ſervices itſelf was under by laying a tax on beer brewed for *ſale*; that is, they compounded with Charles for an exemption from thoſe ſervices for themſelves and their heirs, by a tax to be paid by other people. The ariſtocracy do not purchaſe beer brewed for ſale, but brew their own beer free of the duty, and if any commutation at that time were neceſſary, it ought to have been at the expence of thoſe for whom the exemptions from thoſe ſer-

vices were intended*; inſtead of which it was thrown on an entire different claſs of men.

But the chief object of this progreſſive tax (beſides the juſtice of rendering taxes more equal than they are) is, as already ſtated, to extirpate the overgrown influence ariſing from the unnatural law of primogeniture, and which is one of the principal ſources of corruption at elections.

It would be attended with no good conſequences to enquire how ſuch vaſt eſtates as thirty, forty, or fifty thouſand a year could commence, and that at a time when commerce and manufactures were not in a ſtate to admit of ſuch acquiſitions. Let it be ſufficient to remedy the evil by putting them in a condition of deſcending again to the community, by the quiet means of apportioning them among all the heirs and heireſſes of thoſe families. This will be the more neceſſary, becauſe hitherto the ariſtocracy have quartered their younger children and connections upon the public in uſeleſs poſts, places, and offices, which when aboliſhed will leave them deſtitute, unleſs the law of primogeniture be alſo aboliſhed or ſuperceded.

A progreſſive tax will, in a great meaſure, effect this object, and that as a matter of intereſt to the

* The tax on beer brewed for ſale, from which the ariſtocracy are exempt, is almoſt one million more than the preſent commutation tax, being by the returns of 1788, 1,666,152*l.* and conſequently they ought to take on themſelves the amount of the commutation tax, as they are already exempted from one which is almoſt one million greater.

parties

parties moſt immediately concerned, as will be ſeen by the following table; which ſhews the nett produce upon every eſtate, after ſubtracting the tax. By this it will appear, that after an eſtate exceeds thirteen or fourteen thouſand a year, the remainder produces but little profit to the holder, and conſequently will paſs either to the younger children, or to other kindred.

TABLE III.

Shewing the nett produce of every eſtate from one thouſand to twenty-three thouſand pounds a year.

No. of thouſands per ann.	Total tax ſubtracted.	Nett produce.
	£.	£.
1000	21	979
2000	59	1941
3000	109	2891
4000	184	3816
5000	284	4716
6000	434	5566
7000	634	6366
8000	880	7120
9000	1180	7820
10,000	1530	8470
11,000	1930	9070
12,000	2380	9620
13,000	2880	10,120
14,000	3430	10,570
15,000	4030	10,970

	£.	£.
16,000	4680	11,320
17,000	5380	11,620
18,000	6130	11,870
19,000	6930	12,170
20,000	7780	12,220
21,000	8680	12,320
22,000	9630	12,370
23,000	10,630	12,370

N. B. The odd ſhillings are dropped in this table.

According to this table, an eſtate cannot produce more then 12,370*l.* clear of the land tax and the progreſſive tax, and therefore the dividing ſuch eſtates will follow as a matter of family intereſt. An eſtate of 23,000*l.* a year, divided into five eſtates of four thouſand each and one of three, will be charged only 1129*l.* which is but five *per cent.* but if held by one poſſeſſor will be charged 10,630*l.*

Although an enquiry into the origin of thoſe eſtates be unneceſſary, the continuation of them in their preſent ſtate is another ſubject. It is a matter of national concern. As hereditary eſtates, the law has created the evil, and it ought alſo to provide the remedy. Primogeniture ought to be aboliſhed, not only becauſe it is unnatural and unjuſt, but becauſe the country ſuffers by its operation. By cutting off (as before obſerved) the younger children from their proper portion of inheritance, the public is

loaded

loaded with the expence of maintaining them; and the freedom of elections violated by the overbearing influence which this unjuſt monopoly of family property produces. Nor is this all. It occaſions a waſte of national property. A conſiderable part of the land of the country is rendered unproductive by the great extent of parks and chaſes which this law ſerves to keep up, and this at a time when the annual production of grain is not equal to the national conſumption *.—In ſhort, the evils of the ariſtocratical ſyſtem are ſo great and numerous, ſo inconſiſtent with every thing that is juſt, wiſe, natural, and beneficent, that when they are conſidered, there ought not to be a doubt that many, who are now claſſed under that deſcription, will wiſh to ſee ſuch a ſyſtem aboliſhed.

What pleaſure can they derive from contemplating the expoſed condition, and almoſt certain beggary of their younger offspring? Every ariſtocratical family has an appendage of family beggars hanging round it, which in a few ages, or a few generations, are ſhook off, and conſole themſelves with telling their tale in alms-houſes, work-houſes, and priſons. This is the natural conſequence of ariſtocracy. The peer and the beggar are often of the ſame family. One extreme produces the other: to make one rich many muſt be made poor; neither can the ſyſtem be ſupported by other means.

* See the reports on the corn trade

There are two claſſes of people to whom the laws of England are particularly hoſtile, and thoſe the moſt helpleſs; younger children and the poor. Of the former I have juſt ſpoken; of the latter I ſhall mention one inſtance out of the many that might be produced, and with which I ſhall cloſe this ſubject.

Several laws are in exiſtence for regulating and limiting workmen's wages. Why not leave them as free to make their own bargains, as the law-makers are to let their farms and houſes? Perſonal labour is all the property they have. Why is that little, and the little freedom they enjoy to be infringed? But the injuſtice will appear ſtronger, if we conſider the operation and effect of ſuch laws. When wages are fixed by what is called a law, the legal wages remain ſtationary, while every thing elſe is in progreſſion; and as thoſe who make that law, ſtill continue to lay on new taxes by other laws, they encreaſe the expence of living by one law, and take away the means by another.

But if thoſe gentlemen law-makers and tax-makers thought it right to limit the poor pittance which perſonal labour can produce, and on which a whole family is to be ſupported, they certainly muſt feel themſelves happily indulged in a limitation on their own part, of not leſs than twelve thouſand a year, and that of property they never acquired, (nor probably any of their anceſtors) and of which they have made ſo ill a uſe.

Having

Having now finiſhed this ſubject, I ſhall bring the ſeveral particulars into one view, and then proceed to other matters.

The firſt EIGHT ARTICLES are brought forward from page 136.

1. Abolition of two million poor-rates.

2. Proviſion for two hundred and fifty-two thouſand poor families, at the rate of four pounds per head for each child under fourteen years of age; which, with the addition of two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds, provides alſo education for one million and thirty thouſand children.

3. Annuity of ſix pounds (per ann.) each for all poor perſons, decayed tradeſmen, or others (ſuppoſed ſeventy thouſand) of the age of fifty years, and until ſixty.

4. Annuity of ten pounds each for life for all poor perſons, decayed tradeſmen, and others (ſuppoſed ſeventy thouſand) of the age of ſixty years.

5. Donation of twenty ſhillings each for fifty thouſand births.

6. Donation of twenty ſhillings each for twenty thouſand marriages.

7. Allowance of twenty thouſand pounds for the funeral expences of perſons travelling for work, and dying at a diſtance from their friends.

8. Employment at all times for the caſual poor in the cities of London and Weſtminſter.

Second Enumeration.

9. Abolition of the tax on houſes and windows.

10. Allowance of three ſhillings per week for life to fifteen thouſand diſbanded ſoldiers, and a proportionable allowance to the officers of the diſbanded corps.

11. Encreaſe of pay to the remaining ſoldiers of 19,500*l.* annually.

12. The ſame allowance to the diſbanded navy, and the ſame encreaſe of pay, as to the army.

13. Abolition of the commutation tax.

14. Plan of a progreſſive tax, operating to extirpate the unjuſt and unnatural law of primogeniture, and the vicious influence of the ariſtocratical ſyſtem *.

There yet remains, as already ſtated, one million of ſurplus taxes. Some part of this will be required for circumſtances that do not immediately preſent themſelves, and ſuch part as ſhall not be wanted, will admit a further reduction of taxes equal to that amount.

Among

* When enquiries are made into the condition of the poor, various degrees of diſtreſs will moſt probably be found, to render a different arrangement preferable to that which is already propoſed. Widows with families will be in greater want than where there are huſbands living. There is alſo a difference in the expence of living in different countries; and more ſo in fuel.

Suppoſe

Among the claims that juſtice requires to be made, the condition of the inferior revenue officers will merit attention. It is a reproach to any government to waſte ſuch an immenſity of revenue in ſinecures and nominal and unneceſſary places and offices, and not allow even a decent livelihood to thoſe on whom the labour falls. The ſalary of the inferior officers of the revenue has ſtood at the petty pittance of leſs than fifty pounds a year for upwards of one hundred years. It ought to be ſeventy. About one hundred and twenty thouſand pounds applied to this purpoſe, will put all thoſe ſalaries in a decent condition.

This was propoſed to be done almoſt twenty years ago, but the treaſury-board then in being

	£.
Suppoſe then fifty thouſand extraordinary caſes, at the rate of 10*l.* per family per ann. ——	500,000
100,000 Families, at 8*l.* per family per ann. -	800,000
100,000 Families, at 7*l.* per family per ann. -	700,000
104,000 Families, at 5*l.* per family per ann. -	520,000
And inſtead of ten ſhillings per head for the education of other children, to allow fifty ſhillings per family for that purpoſe to fifty thouſand families	250,000
	2,770,000
140,000 Aged perſons as before, -	1,120,000
	3,890,000

This arrangement amounts to the ſame ſum as ſtated in page 131, including the 250,000*l.* for education; but it provides (including the aged people) for four hundred and four thouſand families, which is almoſt one third of all the families in England.

ſtartled

ſtartled at it, as it might lead to ſimilar expectations from the army and navy; and the event was, that the King, or ſomebody for him, applied to parliament to have his own ſalary raiſed an hundred thouſand a year, which being done, every thing elſe was laid aſide.

With reſpect to another claſs of men, the inferior clergy, I forbear to enlarge on their condition; but all partialities and prejudices for, or againſt, different modes and forms of religion aſide, common juſtice will determine, whether there ought to be an income of twenty or thirty pounds a year to one man, and of ten thouſand to another. I ſpeak on this ſubject with the more freedom, becauſe I am known not to be a Preſbyterian; and therefore the cant cry of court ſycophants, about church and meeting, kept up to amuſe and bewilder the nation, cannot be raiſed againſt me.

Ye ſimple men, on both ſides the queſtion, do ye not ſee through this courtly craft? If ye can be kept diſputing and wrangling about church and meeting, ye juſt anſwer the purpoſe of every courtier, who lives the while on the ſpoil of the taxes, and laughs at your credulity. Every religion is good that teaches man to be good; and I know of none that inſtructs him to be bad.

All the before-mentioned calculations, ſuppoſe only ſixteen millions and an half of taxes paid into the exchequer, after the expence of collection and drawbacks at the cuſtom-houſe and exciſe-office

are

are deducted; whereas the ſum paid into the exchequer is very nearly, if not quite, ſeventeen millions. The taxes raiſed in Scotland and Ireland are expended in thoſe countries, and therefore their ſavings will come out of their own taxes; but if any part be paid into the Engliſh exchequer, it might be remitted. This will not make one hundred thouſand pounds a year difference.

There now remains only the national debt to be conſidered. In the year 1789, the intereſt, excluſive of the tontine, was 9,150,138*l.* How much the capital has been reduced ſince that time the miniſter beſt knows. But after paying the intereſt, aboliſhing the tax on houſes and windows, the commutation tax, and the poor rates; and making all the proviſions for the poor, for the education of children, the ſupport of the aged, the diſbanded part of the army and navy, and encreaſing the pay of the remainder, there will be a ſurplus of one million.

The preſent ſcheme of paying off the national debt appears to me, ſpeaking as an indifferent perſon, to be an ill-concerted, if not a fallacious job. The burthen of the national debt conſiſts not in its being ſo many millions, or ſo many hundred millions, but in the quantity of taxes collected every year to pay the intereſt. If this quantity continue the ſame, the burthen of the national debt is the ſame to all intents and purpoſes, be the capital more or leſs. The only knowledge

which

which the public can have of the reduction of the debt, muſt be through the reduction of taxes for paying the intereſt. The debt, therefore, is not reduced one farthing to the public by all the millions that have been paid; and it would require more money now to purchaſe up the capital, than when the ſcheme began.

Digreſſing for a moment at this point, to which I ſhall return again, I look back to the appointment of Mr. Pitt, as miniſter.

I was then in America. The war was over; and though reſentment had ceaſed, memory was ſtill alive.

When the news of the coalition arrived, though it was a matter of no concern to me as a citizen of America, I felt it as a man. It had ſomething in it which ſhocked, by publicly ſporting with decency, if not with principle. It was impudence in Lord North; it was want of firmneſs in Mr. Fox.

Mr. Pitt was, at that time, what may be called a maiden character in politics. So far from being hackneyed, he appeared not to be initiated into the firſt myſteries of court intrigue. Every thing was in his favour. Reſentment againſt the coalition ſerved as friendſhip to him, and his ignorance of vice was credited for virtue. With the return of peace, commerce and proſperity would riſe of itſelf; yet even this encreaſe was thrown to his account.

When he came to the helm the ſtorm was over, and he had nothing to interrupt his courſe. It required

quired even ingenuity to be wrong, and he ſucceeded. A little time ſhewed him the ſame ſort of man as his predeceſſors had been. Inſtead of profiting by thoſe errors which had accumulated a burthen of taxes unparalleled in the world, he ſought, I might almoſt ſay, he advertiſed for enemies, and provoked means to encreaſe taxation. Aiming at ſomething, he knew not what, he ranſacked Europe and India for adventures, and abandoning the fair pretenſions he began with, became the knight-errant of modern times.

It is unpleaſant to ſee character throw itſelf away. It is more ſo to ſee one's-ſelf deceived. Mr. Pitt had merited nothing, but he promiſed much. He gave ſymptoms of a mind ſuperior to the meanneſs and corruption of courts. His apparent candour encouraged expectations; and the public confidence, ſtunned, wearied, and confounded by a chaos of parties, revived and attached itſelf to him. But miſtaking, as he has done, the diſguſt of the nation againſt the coalition, for merit in himſelf, he has ruſhed into meaſures, which a man leſs ſupported would not have preſumed to act.

All this ſeems to ſhew that change of miniſters amounts to nothing. One goes out, another comes in, and ſtill the ſame meaſures, vices, and extravagance are purſued. It ſignifies not who is miniſter. The defect lies in the ſyſtem. The foundation and the ſuperſtructure of the government

is

is bad. Prop it as you pleaſe, it continually ſinks into court government, and ever will.

I return, as I promiſed, to the ſubject of the national debt, that offspring of the Dutch-Anglo revolution, and its handmaid the Hanover ſucceſſion.

But it is now too late to enquire how it began. Thoſe to whom it is due have advanced the money; and whether it was well or ill ſpent, or pocketed, is not their crime. It is, however, eaſy to ſee, that as the nation proceeds in contemplating the nature and principles of government, and to underſtand taxes, and make compariſons between thoſe of America, France, and England, it will be next to impoſſible to keep it in the ſame torpid ſtate it has hitherto been. Some reform muſt, from the neceſſity of the caſe, ſoon begin. It is not whether theſe principles preſs with little or much force in the preſent moment. They are out. They are abroad in the world, and no force can ſtop them. Like a ſecret told, they are beyond recall; and he muſt be blind indeed that does not ſee that a change is already beginning.

Nine millions of dead taxes is a ſerious thing; and this not only for bad, but in a great meaſure for foreign government. By putting the power of making war into the hands of foreigners who came for what they could get, little elſe was to be expected than what has happened.

Reaſons

Reaſons are already advanced in this work ſhewing that whatever the reforms in the taxes may be, they ought to be made in the current expences of government, and not in the part applied to the intereſt of the national debt. By remitting the taxes of the poor, *they* will be totally relieved, and all diſcontent on their part will be taken away; and by ſtriking off ſuch of the taxes as are already mentioned, the nation will more than recover the whole expence of the mad American war.

There will then remain only the national debt as a ſubject of diſcontent; and in order to remove, or rather to prevent this, it would be good policy in the ſtock-holders themſelves to conſider it as property, ſubject like all other property, to bear ſome portion of the taxes. It would give to it both popularity and ſecurity, and as a great part of its preſent inconvenience is balanced by the capital which it keeps alive, a meaſure of this kind would ſo far add to that balance as to ſilence objections.

This may be done by ſuch gradual means as to accompliſh all that is neceſſary with the greateſt eaſe and convenience.

Inſtead of taxing the capital, the beſt method would be to tax the intereſt by ſome progreſſive ratio, and to leſſen the public taxes in the ſame proportion as the intereſt diminiſhed.

Suppoſe the intereſt was taxed one halfpenny in the pound the firſt year, a penny more the ſecond,

and

and to proceed by a certain ratio to be determined upon, always leſs than any other tax upon property. Such a tax would be ſubtracted from the intereſt at the time of payment, without any expence of collection.

One halfpenny in the pound would leſſen the intereſt and conſequently the taxes, twenty thouſand pounds. The tax on waggons amounts to this ſum, and this tax might be taken off the firſt year. The ſecond year the tax on female ſervants, or ſome other of the like amount might alſo be taken off, and by proceeding in this manner, always applying the tax raiſed from the property of the debt towards its extinction, and not carry it to the current ſervices, it would liberate itſelf.

The ſtockholders, notwithſtanding this tax, would pay leſs taxes than they do now. What they would ſave by the extinction of the poor-rates, and the tax on houſes and windows, and the commutation tax, would be conſiderably greater than what this tax, ſlow, but certain in its operation, amounts to.

It appears to me to be prudence to look out for meaſures that may apply under any circumſtance that may approach. There is, at this moment, a criſis in the affairs of Europe that requires it. Preparation now is wiſdom. If taxation be once let looſe, it will be difficult to re-inſtate it; neither would the relief be ſo effectual, as to proceed by ſome certain and gradual reduction.

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The fraud, hypocriſy, and impoſition of governments, are now beginning to be too well underſtood to promiſe them any long career. The farce of monarchy and ariſtocracy, in all countries, is following that of chivalry, and Mr. Burke is dreſſing for the funeral. Let it then paſs quietly to the tomb of all other follies, and the mourners be comforted.

The time is not very diſtant when England will laugh at itſelf for ſending to Holland, Hanover, Zell, or Brunſwick for men, at the expence of a million a year, who underſtood neither her laws, her language, nor her intereſt, and whoſe capacities would ſcarcely have fitted them for the office of a pariſh conſtable. If government could be truſted to ſuch hands, it muſt be ſome eaſy and ſimple thing indeed, and materials fit for all the purpoſes may be found in every town and village in England.

When it ſhall be ſaid in any country in the world, my poor are happy; neither ignorance nor diſtreſs is to be found among them; my jails are empty of priſoners, my ſtreets of beggars; the aged are not in want, the taxes are not oppreſſive; the rational world is my friend, becauſe I am the friend of its happineſs: when theſe things can be ſaid, then may that country boaſt its conſtitution and its government.

Within the ſpace of a few years we have ſeen two Revolutions, thoſe of America and France. In the former, the conteſt was long, and the conflict ſe-

vere; in the latter, the nation acted with ſuch a conſolidated impulſe, that having no foreign enemy to contend with, the revolution was complete in power the moment it appeared. From both thoſe inſtances it is evident, that the greateſt forces that can be brought into the field of revolutions, are reaſon and common intereſt. Where theſe can have the opportunity of acting, oppoſition dies with fear, or crumbles away by conviction. It is a great ſtanding which they have now univerſally obtained; and we may hereafter hope to ſee revolutions, or changes in governments, produced with the ſame quiet operation by which any meaſure, determinable by reaſon and diſcuſſion, is accompliſhed.

When a nation changes its opinion and habits of thinking, it is no longer to be governed as before; but it would not only be wrong, but bad policy, to attempt by force what ought to be accompliſhed by reaſon. Rebellion conſiſts in forcibly oppoſing the general will of a nation, whether by a party or by a government. There ought, therefore, to be in every nation a method of occaſionally aſcertaining the ſtate of public opinion with reſpect to government. On this point the old government of France was ſuperior to the preſent government of England, becauſe, on extraordinary occaſions, recourſe could be had to what was then called the States General. But in England there are no ſuch occaſional bodies; and as to thoſe who are now called Repreſentatives, a great part of them

them are mere machines of the court, placemen, and dependants.

I preſume, that though all the people of England pay taxes,not an hundredth part of them are electors, and the members of one of the houſes of parliament repreſent nobody but themſelves. There is, therefore, no power but the voluntary will of the people that has a right to act in any matter reſpecting a general reform; and by the ſame right that two perſons can confer on ſuch a ſubject, a thouſand may. The object, in all ſuch preliminary proceedings, is to find out what the general ſenſe of a nation is, and to be governed by it. If it prefer a bad or defective government to a reform, or chuſe to pay ten times more taxes than there is occaſion for, it has a right ſo to do; and ſo long as the majority do not impoſe conditions on the minority, different to what they impoſe on themſelves, though there may be much error, there is no injuſtice. Neither will the error continue long. Reaſon and diſcuſſion will ſoon bring things right, however wrong they may begin. By ſuch a proceſs no tumult is to be apprehended. The poor, in all countries, are naturally both peaceable and grateful in all reforms in which their intereſt and happineſs is included. It is only by neglecting and rejecting them that they become tumultuous.

The objects that now preſs on the public attention are, the French revolution, and the proſpect of a general revolution in governments. Of all

nations in Europe, there is none ſo much intereſted in the French revolution as England. Enemies for ages, and that at a vaſt expence, and without any national object, the opportunity now preſents itſelf of amicably cloſing the ſcene, and joining their efforts to reform the reſt of Europe. By doing this, they will not only prevent the further effuſion of blood, and encreaſe of taxes, but be in a condition of getting rid of a conſiderable part of their preſent burthens, as has been already ſtated. Long experience however has ſhewn, that reforms of this kind are not thoſe which old governments wiſh to promote; and therefore it is to nations, and not to ſuch governments, that theſe matters preſent themſelves.

In the preceding part of this work, I have ſpoken of an alliance between England, France, and America, for purpoſes that were to be afterwards mentioned. Though I have no direct authority on the part of America, I have good reaſon to conclude, that ſhe is diſpoſed to enter into a conſideration of ſuch a meaſure, provided, that the governments with which ſhe might ally, acted as national governments, and not as courts enveloped in intrigue and myſtery. That France as a nation, and a national government, would prefer an alliance with England, is a matter of certainty. Nations, like individuals, who have long been enemies, without knowing each other, or knowing why, become the better friends when they diſcover

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the errors and impoſitions under which they had acted.

Admitting, therefore, the probability of ſuch a connection, I will ſtate ſome matters by which ſuch an alliance, together with that of Holland, might render ſervice, not only to the parties immediately concerned, but to all Europe.

It is, I think, certain, that if the fleets of England, France, and Holland were confederated, they could propoſe, with effect, a limitation to, and a general diſmantling of all the navies in Europe, to a certain proportion to be agreed upon.

Firſt, That no new ſhip of war ſhall be built by any power in Europe, themſelves included.

Secondly, That all the navies now in exiſtence ſhall be put back, ſuppoſe to one-tenth of their preſent force. This will ſave to France and England at leaſt two millions ſterling annually to each, and their relative force be in the ſame proportion as it is now. If men will permit themſelves to think, as rational beings ought to think, nothing can appear more ridiculous and abſurd, excluſive of all moral reflections, than to be at the expence of building navies, filling them with men, and then hauling them into the ocean, to try which can ſink each other faſteſt. Peace, which coſts nothing, is attended with infinitely more advantage, than any victory with all its expence. But this, though it beſt anſwers the purpoſe of nations, does not that of court governments, whoſe habited policy is pretence for taxation, places, and offices.

It is, I think, alſo certain, that the above confederated powers, together with that of the United States of America, can propoſe with effect, to Spain, the independance of South America, and the opening thoſe countries of immenſe extent and wealth to the general commerce of the world, as North America now is.

With how much more glory, and advantage to itſelf, does a nation act, when it exerts its powers to reſcue the world from bondage, and to create itſelf friends, than when it employs thoſe powers to encreaſe ruin, deſolation, and miſery. The horrid ſcene that is now acting by the Engliſh government in the Eaſt-Indies, is fit only to be told of Goths and Vandals, who, deſtitute of principle, robbed and tortured the world they were incapable of enjoying.

The opening of South America would produce an immenſe field of commerce, and a ready money market for manufactures, which the eaſtern world does not. The Eaſt is already a country full of manufactures, the importation of which is not only an injury to the manufactures of England, but a drain upon its ſpecie. The balance againſt England by this trade is regularly upwards of half a million annually ſent out in the Eaſt-India ſhips in ſilver; and this is the reaſon, together with German intrigue, and German ſubſidies, there is ſo little ſilver in England.

But any war is harveſt to ſuch governments, however ruinous it may be to a nation. It ſerves to keep

keep up deceitful expectations which prevent a people looking into the defects and abuſes of government. It is the *lo here!* and the *lo there!* that amuſes and cheats the multitude.

Never did ſo great an opportunity offer itſelf to England, and to all Europe, as is produced by the two Revolutions of America and France. By the former, freedom has a national champion in the Weſtern world; and by the latter, in Europe. When another nation ſhall join France, deſpotiſm and bad government will ſcarcely dare to appear. To uſe a trite expreſſion, the iron is becoming hot all over Europe. The inſulted German and the enſlaved Spaniard, the Ruſs and the Pole, are beginning to think. The preſent age will hereafter merit to be called the Age of reaſon, and the preſent generation will appear to the future as the Adam of a new world.

When all the governments of Europe ſhall be eſtabliſhed on the repreſentative ſyſtem, nations will become acquainted, and the animoſities and prejudices fomented by the intrigue and artifice of courts, will ceaſe. The oppreſſed ſoldier will become a freeman; and the tortured ſailor, no longer dragged along the ſtreets like a felon, will purſue his mercantile voyage in ſafety. It would be better that nations ſhould continue the pay of their ſoldiers during their lives, and give them their diſcharge and reſtore them to freedom and their friends, and ceaſe recruiting, than retain ſuch multitudes at the ſame expence, in a condition uſeleſs

to ſociety and themſelves. As ſoldiers have hitherto been treated in moſt countries, they might be ſaid to be without a friend. Shunned by the citizen on an apprehenſion of being enemies to liberty, and too often inſulted by thoſe who commanded them, their condition was a double oppreſſion. But where genuine principles of liberty pervade a people, every thing is reſtored to order; and the ſoldier civily treated, returns the civility.

In contemplating revolutions, it is eaſy to perceive that they may ariſe from two diſtinct cauſes; the one, to avoid or get rid of ſome great calamity; the other, to obtain ſome great and poſitive good; and the two may be diſtinguiſhed by the names of active and paſſive revolutions. In thoſe which proceed from the former cauſe, the temper becomes incenſed and ſowered; and the redreſs, obtained by danger, is too often ſullied by revenge. But in thoſe which proceed from the latter, the heart, rather animated than agitated, enters ſerenely upon the ſubject. Reaſon and diſcuſſion, perſuaſion and conviction, become the weapons in the conteſt, and it is only when thoſe are attempted to be ſuppreſſed that recource is had to violence. When men unite in agreeing that a *thing is good*, could it be obtained, ſuch as relief from a burden of taxes and the extinction of corruption, the object is more than half accompliſhed. What they approve as the end, they will promote in the means.

Will

Will any man ſay, in the preſent exceſs of taxation, falling ſo heavily on the poor, that a remiſſion of five pounds annually of taxes to one hundred and four thouſand poor families is not a *good thing?* Will he ſay, that a remiſſion of ſeven pounds annually to one hundred thouſand other poor families—of eight pounds annually to another hundred thouſand poor families, and of ten pounds annually to fifty thouſand poor and widowed families, are not *good things?* And to proceed a ſtep farther in this climax, will he ſay, that to provide againſt the misfortunes to which all human life is ſubject, by ſecuring ſix pounds annually for all poor, diſtreſſed, and reduced perſons of the age of fifty and until ſixty, and of ten pounds annually after ſixty is not a *good thing?*

Will he ſay, that an abolition of two million of poor-rates to the houſe-keepers, and of the whole of the houſe and window-light tax and of the commutation tax is not a *good thing?* Or will he ſay, that to aboliſh corruption is a *bad thing?*

If, therefore, the good to be obtained be worthy of a paſſive, rational, and coſtleſs revolution, it would be bad policy to prefer waiting for a calamity that ſhould force a violent one. I have no idea, conſidering the reforms which are now paſſing and ſpreading throughout Europe, that England will permit herſelf to be the laſt; and where the occaſion and the opportunity quietly offer, it is better than to wait for a turbulent neceſſity. It may be conſidered as an honour to the animal faculties

ties of man to obtain redreſs by courage and danger, but it is far greater honour to the rational faculties to accompliſh the ſame object by reaſon, accommodation, and general conſent *.

As reforms, or revolutions, call them which you pleaſe, extend themſelves among nations, thoſe nations will form connections and conventions, and when a few are thus confederated, the progreſs will be rapid, till deſpotiſm and corrupt government be totally expelled, at leaſt out of two quarters of the world, Europe and America. The Algerine piracy may then be commanded to ceaſe, for it is only by the malicious policy of old governments, againſt each other, that it exiſts.

* I know it is the opinion of many of the moſt enlightened characters in France (there always will be thoſe who ſee farther into events than others) not only among the general maſs of citizens, but of many of the principal members of the former National Aſſembly, that the monarchical plan will not continue many years in that country. They have found out, that as wiſdom cannot be made hereditary, power ought not; and that, for a man to merit a million ſtirling a year from a nation, he ought to have a mind capable of comprehending from an atom to a univerſe; which, if he had, he would be above receiving the pay. But they wiſhed not to appear to lead the nation faſter than its own reaſon and intereſt dictated. In all the converſations where I have been preſent upon this ſubject, the idea always was, that when ſuch a time, from the general opinion of the nation, ſhall arrive, that the honourable and liberal method would be, to make a handſome preſent in fee ſimple to the perſon whoever he may be, that ſhall then be in the monarchical office, and for him to retire to the enjoyment of private life, poſſeſſing his ſhare of general rights and privileges, and to be no more accountable to the public for his time and his conduct than any other citizen.

Throughout

Throughout this work, various and numerous as the ſubjects are, which I have taken up and inveſtigated, there is only a ſingle paragraph upon religion, viz. "*that every religion is good, that "teaches man to be good.*"

I have carefully avoided to enlarge upon the ſubject, becauſe I am inclined to believe, that what is called the preſent miniſtry wiſh to ſee contentions about religion kept up, to prevent the nation turning its attention to ſubjects of government. It is, as if they were to ſay, "*Look that "way, or any way, but this.*"

But as religion is very improperly made a political machine, and the reality of it is thereby deſtroyed, I will conclude this work with ſtating in what light religion appears to me.

If we ſuppoſe a large family of children, who, on any particular day, or particular circumſtance, made it a cuſtom to preſent to their parent ſome token of their affection and gratitude, each of them would make a different offering, and moſt probably in a different manner. Some would pay their congratulations in themes of verſe or proſe, by ſome little devices, as their genius dictated, or according to what they thought would pleaſe; and, perhaps, the leaſt of all, not able to do any of thoſe things, would ramble into the garden, or the field, and gather what it thought the prettieſt flower it could find, though, perhaps, it might be but a ſimple weed. The parent would be more gratified by ſuch variety, than if the whole of them

them had acted on a concerted plan, and each had made exactly the same offering. This would have the cold appearance of contrivance, or the harsh one of controul. But of all unwelcome things, nothing could more afflict the parent than to know, that the whole of them had afterwards gotten together by the ears, boys and girls, fighting, scratching, reviling, and abusing each other about which was the best or the worst present.

Why may we not suppose, that the great Father of all is pleased with variety of devotion; and that the greatest offence we can act, is that by which we seek to torment and render each other miserable. For my own part, I am fully satisfied that what I am now doing, with an endeavour to conciliate mankind, to render their condition happy, to unite nations that have hitherto been enemies, and to extirpate the horrid practice of war, and break the chains of slavery and oppression, is acceptable in his sight, and being the best service I can perform, I act it chearfully.

I do not believe that any two men, on what are called doctrinal points, think alike who think at all. It is only those who have not thought that appear to agree. It is in this case as with what is called the British constitution. It has been taken for granted to be good, and encomiums have supplied the place of proof. But when the nation come to examine into its principles and the abuses it admits, it will be found to have more defects than I have pointed out in this work and the former.

As to what are called national religions, we may,

may, with as much propriety, talk of national Gods. It is either political craft or the remains of the Pagan ſyſtem, when every nation had its ſeparate and particular deity. Among all the writers of the Engliſh church clergy, who have treated on the general ſubject of religion, the preſent Biſhop of Landaff has not been excelled, and it is with much pleaſure that I take the opportunity of expreſſing this token of reſpect.

I have now gone through the whole of the ſubject, at leaſt, as far as it appears to me at preſent. It has been my intention for the five years I have been in Europe, to offer an addreſs to the people of England on the ſubject of government, if the opportunity preſented itſelf before I returned to America. Mr. Burke has thrown it in my way, and I thank him. On a certain occaſion three years ago, I preſſed him to propoſe a national convention to be fairly elected for the purpoſe of taking the ſtate of the nation into conſideration; but I found, that however ſtrongly the parliamentary current was then ſetting againſt the party he acted with, their policy was to keep every thing within that field of corruption, and truſt to accidents. Long experience had ſhewn that parliaments would follow any change of miniſters, and on this they reſted their hopes and their expectations.

Formerly, when diviſions aroſe reſpecting governments, recourſe was had to the ſword, and a civil war enſued. That ſavage cuſtom is exploded by the new ſyſtem, and reference is had to national conventions. Diſcuſſion and the general will arbitrates

bitrates the queſtion, and to this, private opinion yields with a good grace, and order is preſerved uninterrupted.

Some gentlemen have affected to call the principles upon which this work and the former part of *Rights of Man* are founded, "a new fangled doctrine." The queſtion is not whether thoſe principles are new or old, but whether they are right or wrong. Suppoſe the former, I will ſhew their effect by a figure eaſily underſtood.

It is now towards the middle of February. Were I to take a turn into the country, the trees would preſent a leafleſs winterly appearance. As people are apt to pluck twigs as they walk along, I perhaps might do the ſame, and by chance might obſerve, that a *ſingle bud* on that twig had begun to ſwell. I ſhould reaſon very unnaturally, or rather not reaſon at all, to ſuppoſe *this* was the *only* bud in England which had this appearance. Inſtead of deciding thus, I ſhould inſtantly conclude, that the ſame appearance was beginning, or about to begin, every where; and though the vegetable ſleep will continue longer on ſome trees and plants than on others, and though ſome of them may not *bloſſom* for two or three years, all will be in leaf in the ſummer, except thoſe which are *rotten*. What pace the political ſummer may keep with the natural, no human foreſight can determine. It is, however, not difficult to perceive that the ſpring is begun.—Thus wiſhing, as I ſincerely do, freedom and happineſs to all nations, I cloſe the

SECOND PART.

APPENDIX.

AS the publication of this work has been delayed beyond the time intended, I think it not improper, all circumſtances conſidered, to ſtate the cauſes that have occaſioned the delay.

The reader will probably obſerve, that ſome parts in the plan contained in this work for reducing the taxes, and certain parts in Mr. Pitt's ſpeech at the opening of the preſent ſeſſion, Tueſday, January 31, are ſo much alike, as to induce a belief, that either the Author had taken the hint from Mr. Pitt, or Mr. Pitt from the Author.—I will firſt point out the parts that are ſimilar, and then ſtate ſuch circumſtances as I am acquainted with, leaving the reader to make his own concluſion.

Conſidering it almoſt an unprecedented caſe, that taxes ſhould be propoſed to be taken off, it is equally as extraordinary that ſuch a meaſure ſhould occur to two perſons at the ſame time; and ſtill more ſo, (conſidering the vaſt variety and multiplicity of taxes) that they ſhould hit on the ſame ſpecific taxes. Mr. Pitt has mentioned, in his ſpeech, the tax on *Carts* and *Waggons*—that on *Female Servants*—the lowering the tax on *Candles*, and the taking off the tax of three ſhillings on *Houſes* having under ſeven windows.

Every one of thoſe ſpecific taxes are a part of the plan contained in this work, and propoſed alſo to be taken off. Mr. Pitt's plan, it is true, goes no farther than to a reduction of three hundred and twenty thouſand pounds; and the reduction propoſed in this work to nearly ſix millions. I have made my calculations on only ſixteen millions and an half of revenue, ſtill aſſerting that it was "very "nearly, if not quite, ſeventeen millions." Mr. Pitt ſtates it at 16,690,000. I know enough of the matter to ſay, that he has not *over*ſtated it. Having thus given the particulars, which correſpond in this work and his ſpeech, I will ſtate a chain of circumſtances that may lead to ſome explanation.

The firſt hint for leſſening the taxes, and that as a conſequence flowing from the French revolution, is to be found in the ADDRESS and DECLARATION of the Gentlemen who met at the Thatched-Houſe Tavern, Auguſt 20, 1791. Among many other particulars ſtated in that Addreſs, is the following, put as an interrogation to the

govern-

government oppoſers of the French Revolution. " *Are* " *they ſorry that the pretence for new oppreſſive taxes, and the* " *occaſion for continuing many old taxes will be at an end?*

It is well known, that the perſons who chiefly frequent the Thatched-Houſe Tavern, are men of court connections, and ſo much did they take this Addreſs and Declaration reſpecting the French revolution and the reduction of taxes in diſguſt, that the Landlord was under the neceſſity of informing the Gentlemen, who compoſed the meeting of the twentieth of Auguſt, and who propoſed holding another meeting, that he could not receive them *.

What was only hinted at in the Addreſs and Declaration, reſpecting taxes and principles of government, will be found reduced to a regular ſyſtem in this work. But as Mr. Pitt's ſpeech contains ſome of the ſame things reſpecting taxes, I now come to give the circumſtances before alluded to.

The caſe is: This work was intended to be publiſhed juſt before the meeting of Parliament, and for that purpoſe a conſiderable part of the copy was put into the printer's hands in September, and all the remaining copy, as far as page 160, which contains the parts to which Mr. Pitt's ſpeech is ſimilar, was given to him full ſix weeks before the meeting of parliament, and he was informed of the time at which it was to appear. He had compoſed nearly the whole

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* The gentleman who ſigned the addreſs and declaration as chairman of the meeting, M. Horne Tooke, being generally ſuppoſed to be the perſon who drew it up, and having ſpoken much in commendation of it, has been jocularly accuſed of praiſing his own work. To free him from this embaraſſment, and to ſave him the repeated trouble of mentioning the author, as he has not failed to do, I make no heſitation in ſaying, that as the opportunity of benefiting by the French Revolution eaſily occurred to me, I drew up the publication in queſtion, and ſhewed it to him and ſome other gentlemen; who, fully approving it, held a meeting for the purpoſe of making it public, and ſubſcribed to the amount of fifty guineas to defray the expence of advertiſing. I believe there are at this time, in England, a greater number of men acting on diſintereſted principles, and determined to look into the nature and practices of government themſelves, and not blindly truſt, as has hitherto been the caſe, either to government generally, or to parliaments, or to parliamentary oppoſition, than at any former period. Had this been done a century ago, corruption and taxation had not arrived to the height they are now at.

whole about a fortnight before the time of Parliament meeting, and had printed as far as page 112, and had given me a proof of the next ſheet, up to page 128. It was then in ſufficient forwardneſs to be out at the time propoſed, as two other ſheets were ready for ſtriking off. I had before told him, that if he thought he ſhould be ſtraightened for time, I would get part of the work done at another preſs, which he deſired me not to do. In this manner the work ſtood on the Tueſday fortnight preceding the meeting of Parliament, when all at once, without any previous intimation, though I had been with him the evening before, he ſent me, by one of his workmen, all the remaining copy, from page 112, declining to go on with the work *on any conſideration*.

To account for this extraordinary conduct I was totally at a loſs, as he ſtopped at the part where the arguments on ſyſtems and principles of government cloſed, and where the plan for the reduction of taxes, the education of children, and the ſupport of the poor and the aged begins; and ſtill more eſpecially, as he had, at the time of his beginning to print, and before he had ſeen the whole copy, offered a thouſand pounds for the copy-right, together with the future copy-right of the former part of the Rights of Man. I told the perſon who brought me this offer that I ſhould not accept it, and wiſhed it not to be renewed, giving him as my reaſon, that though I believed the printer to be an honeſt man, I would never put it in the power of any printer or publiſher to ſuppreſs or alter a work of mine, by making him maſter of the copy, or give to him the right of ſelling it to any miniſter, or to any other perſon, or to treat as a mere matter of traffic, that which I intended ſhould operate as a principle.

His refuſal to complete the work (which he could not purchaſe) obliged me to ſeek for another printer, and this of conſequence would throw the publication back till after the meeting of Parliament, otherways it would have appeared that Mr. Pitt had only taken up a part of the plan which I had more fully ſtated.

Whether that gentleman, or any other, had ſeen the work, or any part of it, is more than I have authority to ſay. But the manner in which the work was returned, and the particular time at which this was done, and that after the offers he had made, are ſuſpicious circumſtances. I know what the opinion of bookſellers and publiſhers is upon ſuch a caſe, but as to my own opinion, I chuſe to make no declara-

tion. There are many ways by which proof ſheets may be procured by other perſons before a work publicly appear; to which I ſhall add a certain circumſtance, which is,

A miniſterial bookſeller in Piccadilly who has been employed, as common report ſays, by a clerk of one of the boards cloſely connected with the miniſtry (the board of trade and plantation of which Hawkſbury is preſident) to publiſh what he calls my Life (I wiſh his own life and that thſoe of the cabinet were as good) uſed to have his books printed at the ſame printing-office that I employed; but when the former part of *Rights of Man* came out, he took his work away in dudgeon; and about a week or ten days before the printer returned my copy, he came to make him an offer of his work again, which was accepted. This would conſequently give him admiſſion into the printing-office where the ſheets of this work were then lying; and as bookſellers and printers are free with each other, he would have the opportunity of ſeeing what was going on. —Be the caſe however as it may, Mr. Pitt's plan, little and diminutive as it is, would have had a very awkward appearance, had this work appeared at the time the printer had engaged to finiſh it.

I have now ſtated the particulars which occaſioned the delay, from the propoſal to purchaſe, to the refuſal to print. If all the Gentlemen are innocent, it is very unfortunate for them that ſuch a variety of ſuſpicious circumſtances ſhould, without any deſign, arrange themſelves together.

Having now finiſhed this part, I will conclude with ſtating another circumſtance.

About a fortnight or three weeks before the meeting of Parliament, a ſmall addition, amounting to about twelve ſhillings and ſix-pence a year, was made to the pay of the ſoldiers, or rather, their pay was docked ſo much leſs. Some Gentlemen who knew, in part, that this work would contain a plan of reforms reſpecting the oppreſſed condition of ſoldiers, wiſhed me to add a note to the work, ſignifying, that the part upon that ſubject had been in the printer's hands ſome weeks before that addition of pay was propoſed. I declined doing this, leſt it ſhould be interpreted into an air of vanity, or an endeavour to excite ſuſpicion (for which, perhaps, there might be no grounds) that ſome of the government gentlemen, had, by ſome means or other, made out what this work would contain: and had not the printing been interrupted ſo as to occaſion a delay beyond the time fixed for publication, nothing contained in this appendix would have appeared.

THOMAS PAINE.

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